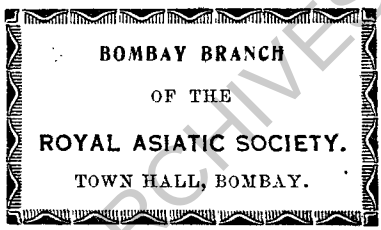
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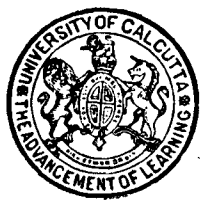
VOL. I : SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC

BY

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FORE WORD

Every workshop has its by-products and the historian's is not an exception. Mr. Kalikinkar Datta has been, for the last few years, engaged in an intensive study of the history of Bengal during the 18th century. The main results of his investigation have been embodied in another volume but a few chips from his workshop have been presented in the following pages. There is a general impression among lay readers that the modern period affords but little scope for a research student's scrutiny; a casual examination of Mr. Datta's *Studies* will convince everybody that a huge mass of literary and documentary records still remains to be sifted and utilised. It is needless to say that Mr. Datta has not attempted a systematic survey of the political and economic history of his province, but he has made a laudable effort to throw new light on some of the least known aspects of that history. His reconstruction of the social history, for instance, will prove of immense interest. He has satisfactorily proved that neither the fairer sex nor the humble castes, dubbed as "depressed" under the new dispensation, were either uneducated or uncultured. Anandamayī Guptā earned a unique

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fame for her literary skill ; and if Bhāgyamanta Dhupi took the trouble of transcribing Dvija Bhabānanda's vernacular version of *Harivaṁśa* it is futile to suggest that a washerman in those days was devoid of literacy or incapable of appreciating the simple charms of Bengali poetry. Madhusudan Nāpit, a barber as his surname indicates, was himself an author and claimed to be the son and grandson of famous authors. He truly belonged to the intellectual aristocracy of the land though his place in the Hindu society from the caste point of view was lowly indeed. If the caste system was rigid, we should not forget that, it did not stand in the way of literary *camaraderie* between the high born Brahmin and the humble washerman.

The relations between the two principal communities of the province seem to have been far from unfriendly, particularly in the rural area. Satya Pir was worshipped by Hindus and Muslims alike, and the rival faiths were not only tolerated but drew common devotees from both the communities. It is only in the court circle that religious differences were exploited for political purposes.

The major part of the present volume has been devoted to the East India Company, their factories in this province, their investment, their purchases and sales, their agents and officers ; and the inquisitive student will find these chapters a

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veritable mine of information. He may profitably study the main trade routes and highways as indicated in the chapter dealing with the economic condition of Bengal and note how many opulent marts and important market places have lost their trade and gone out of the picture.

Mr. Kalikinkar Datta has produced an excellent book of reference which will be widely appreciated in India and outside.

SENATE HOUSE :
The 15th August, 1936. } SURENDRANATH SEN.

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TO MY

ALMA MATER

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PREFACE

The middle of the eighteenth century forms an important epoch in the History of the Bengal Subah. It witnessed great political changes, pregnant with many significant issues for the future. With the accession of Allahvardi to the masnad of Bengal in 1740 began the rule of the really independent Nawabs of Bengal, as the Imperial authority at Delhi had by that time been practically reduced to insignificance. But this weakening of the Imperial authority also gave birth to other circumstances which from the very outset marred all hopes of a progressive and peaceful government of independent rulers in Bengal. Thus the Marathas, among others, availed themselves of this opportunity to enter into the heart of Bengal, and for several years their plunderings made the pulse of Bengal beat with tremendous quickness. Just a few years after this storm had blown over the country, the destiny of Bengal received a new turn in the field of Plassey. Buxar strengthened what had begun with Plassey, and the results of these two battles indicated the gradual passing away of the old order of things and the birth of a new one, though presages of such a change had appeared already during the early eighteenth century.

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It is indeed highly important for us to know what the material, social and cultural conditions of the people of Bengal were during this transitional period in the country's life. Hitherto the history of our country has been mostly the history of its rulers, the conquerors and the military adventurers, the people themselves having been almost completely and consistently ignored. In this work I have tried to give an accurate, though rather incomplete, picture of the people's life,—the laws and customs of their society and their economic resources and transactions. In every age and clime, almost all the great movements in the world's history have been influenced by social and economic factors. Here also I have been able to show how the social and economic factors in the 18th century history of Bengal were greatly interrelated with the contemporary political changes.

The sources utilised for preparing this thesis may be classified under four heads, *viz.* :—

(I) Contemporary Literature, Bengali * and Sanskrit; (II) Works in Persian, some in original manuscripts and some in translations; (III) Records of the East India Company, both unpublished and published; (IV) Accounts and writings of contemporary European travellers and

* I plodded through a mass of early Oriya and Hindi literary fragments, but unluckily I came across no materials useful for my purposes.

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writers including memoirs and journals left by them.

The materials collected from these sources have been carefully scrutinised and studied. It is perhaps for the first time that contemporary eighteenth century literature has been utilised for historical purposes, and also it is the first attempt to write a connected social history of the country during this momentous period in its annals, from a study of various sources. Social and Economic lives are influenced by each other. So, after dealing with the different aspects of social life I have endeavoured to study the economic condition of the Bengal Subah from the abovementioned sources.

Some unpublished sources have been here brought to light for the first time and the published ones, some of which had been already known to scholars, have been used here exhaustively after systematic and careful study. I have also duly recognised the value of incidental references to facts of Social and Economic Life in the pages of contemporary literature. Literature is often the mirror of the age in which it flourishes. A poet, a novelist or an essayist is bound to be influenced by the ideas and facts of contemporary life in its different aspects,—social, economic and political ; and this influence is reflected through his writings. In fact, for a rational study of the history of our country,—its culture and social life, its economic

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condition and its political life, the study of Indian Literature of respective periods is indispensably necessary.

The unpublished Records preserved under the custody of the Imperial Record Department, Calcutta, form a veritable mine of information for a stude nt of Social and Economic History of Modern India. By 1927 Professor J. C. Sinha, Ph.D., utilised some of these records in writing his 'Economic Annals of Bengal.' In November of the same year Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Kt., and Mr. R. B. Ramsbotham, I. E. S., emphasised, in the report of the Records sub-committee, the value of those records for writing a "correct economic history of India under the Company." Since 1928 I have tried in my own humble way to study exhaustively those which have appeared to me to be relevant for my work and have been able to bring out many new and significant facts from papers like (*a*) Letters from the Council in Calcutta to the Court of Directors, (*b*) Letters from the Select Committee in Bengal to the Court of Directors, (*c*) Letters from the Court of Directors to the Council in Calcutta, (*d*) Letters from the Court of Directors to the Select Committee in Bengal, (*e*) Original Consultations, (*f*) Public Proceedings (copies of original consultations preserved in Proceedings Book), (*g*) Bengal Secret Consultations (Foreign Department), (*h*) Calendar of Persian Correspondence.

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The Imperial Record Department has preserved Records regularly from 1748, but there are also for the period before 1748 copies (in typescript) of some Records of the India Office and these have been kept under Miscellaneous Records of the Home and Foreign Departments and under Section III of the Persian Department. As for example, the Letters from Bengal to the Court of Directors, 15th December, 1703 to 22nd December, 1748, which I have utilised for my work, are copies obtained from the India Office. In quoting extracts from the Records I have retained their original form in spelling and punctuation.

In the first chapter I have tried to describe the different aspects of social Life in five sections on the basis of the materials gathered from the abovementioned sources, mostly from Contemporary Literature.

The second chapter dealing with English Factories and Investments is based almost entirely on unpublished records of the Imperial Record Department and is original in every sense. No previous writer has written any account of the English Factories established through the different parts of the country, including the most interior ones, nor has any one studied before, in details, the nature, volume, etc., of the British East India Company's investments. This chapter contains many new facts of considerable importance from the standpoint of Economic History and will greatly supplement our knowledge of the East India

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Company's Trade during the period under review. It has been divided into three sections ; the first section deals with the general features of 'English Factories and Investments,' the second with investments from year to year, and the third section contains detailed histories of some of the important Factories.

The third chapter contains a description of the Commercial Relations of Bengal with the other Asiatic countries, with the other provinces of India and with the European Trading Companies. In the section on the Asiatic Trade of Bengal I have added much new information to what has been rather briefly referred to by Professor J. C. Sinha, Ph.D., in his 'Economic Annals of Bengal,' while my treatment of Inter-provincial Trade of Bengal is original, all the facts relating to it being newly discovered. In section 2, a detailed account of the British East India Company's trade in Bengal in the pre-Plassey period has been prepared for the first time from hitherto unutilised sources. Modern writers like Mr. R. C. Dutt, Mr. C. J. Hamilton, and Dr. J. C. Sinha have written something about the history of English trade in Bengal after Plassey; but my treatment of the subject has been more exhaustive containing many supplementary information based on a study of some new sources. The trade of the East India Company formed the most important factor in the economic and ultimately

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political history of Bengal in the eighteenth century, and every bit of information relating to it is valuable for a student of Modern Indian History.

In the fourth chapter I have tried to describe the different aspects of the internal economic condition of Bengal in separate sections. The section on 'Communications' has been based mostly on contemporary accounts left by Rennel, Plaisted, Vijayarāma Senaviśārada and others. A knowledge of the state of communications within a country is indispensably necessary for understanding its economic condition which is very much influenced by the former. I do not find any reason to believe that the state of communications in eighteenth century Bengal was unsuited for commercial purposes of those days, and that there was anything like 'economic isolation' for want of means of communications. The improvements of the later 19th and 20th centuries should not lead one to ignore what existed in the 18th century. In section 2 of this chapter I have tried to describe the state of 'Manufactures, Industries and Handicrafts' with reference to the localities which were connected with these and on the basis of facts most of which were unknown before. Much has already been said by contemporary writers like Verelst, Bolts and others and by some modern writers like Mr. R. C. Dutt and Mr. C. J. Hamilton about the causes of the decline of cotton and other industries of Bengal during the second half

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of the eighteenth century. I find that the root cause of this decline lay in the general political disorders of the time and that it had its beginning long before 1757. In fact, the pre-Plassey period of Bengal history left a legacy of economic decline. The continual wars, frequent rebellions and occasional conspiracies "wasted the whole country" (Rennel) and created opportunities for adventurers to exploit it for their own ends. Industries cannot flourish within a country in the absence of peace and order. The political revolutions in Bengal, which affected not only the rulers and the grandees but also the common people like the weavers and the agriculturists, exercised a pernicious influence on the industries of Bengal. I have carefully examined in relevant places the economic effects of the Maratha ravages, the Afghan rebellions, and the other political convulsions. In the two succeeding sections I have attempted to prepare connected accounts of 'Markets and Prices of Articles' and 'Classes and Conditions of Labour.' It has not been possible to write these sections in such a comprehensive and connected manner as can be done in accounts of Indian Economic life of modern times, because we have no systematic state reports, documents and statistics for those days. But I am confident that I have utilised almost every original source for collecting bits of information relating to these topics. No one is more conscious than myself of the various imperfections

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of this work; and being a young devotee in the field of historical researches I crave the indulgence of the learned readers whose suggestions would be most thankfully accepted.

I take this opportunity of expressing my obligation to those who have helped me in the preparation of this work. I am especially indebted to Professor Dr. Subimal Chandra Sarkar, M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon.), Head of the Department of History, Patna College. With great zeal and love he ungrudgingly guided me in my work from day to day, and helped me in all possible ways. I am grateful to Mr. G. E. Fawcus, M.A., I.E.S., O.B.E., Director of Public Instruction, Bihar and Orissa, to Dr. H. Lambert, I.E.S., late Principal, Patna College, and to Mr. J. S. Armour, M. A., I. E.S., Principal, Patna College, who kindly encouraged me at every step, especially by introducing me to the Government Record Rooms in different places. Dr. Azimuddin Ahmad, Ph.D., Head of the Arabic and Persian Department, Patna College, and my friend and colleague Prof. S. H. Askari, M.A., B.L., Assistant Professor of History, Patna College, deserve my sincere thanks for the help that I received from them in the matter of utilising some original Persian manuscripts. I am much obliged to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Kt., for having kindly lent me the use of his copy of 'Correspondance du Conseil de Chandernagor avec divers' and his transcript of a portion of

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'Tarikh-i-Bangala' by Salimulla. My heartiest thanks are also due to Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali, M.A., F.R.S.L., Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, and his staff for the facilities they offered me in studying their records. I am much grateful to Mr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, M.A., B.L., Barrister-at-Law, Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University, to Mr. J. C. Chakravorti, M.A., Registrar, Calcutta University, and to Mr. A. C. Ghatak, M.A., Superintendent, Calcutta University Press, whose kind help has enabled me to bring out the book. My friend and colleague Prof. Jagadish Narayan Sarkar, M.A., and my students Babu Brij Mohan Prasad, B.A., and Babu M. C. Samaddar, B.A., have kindly performed the tedious task of preparing the Index, for which I thank them sincerely.

The authorities of the following institutions too have laid me under a heavy debt of gratitude by allowing me to study their valuable collections:—The Oriental Public Library, Bankipore; Patna College Library; Bihar and Orissa Research Society's Library; Imperial Library, Calcutta; Vaṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣad, Calcutta; the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta; the State Library of His Highness the Nawab of Rampur; the Calcutta University Library; the Ratan Library, Suri (Birbhum District), and the Library of the late Prof. J. N. Samaddar, Patna.

PATNA COLLEGE,
PATNA
(BIHAR & ORISSA).

KALIKINKAR DATTA.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Seir = Seir-ul-mutakherin.

Ryaz = Ryaz-us-salatin.

Wafa = Muhammad Wafa, author of Waqai Fath Bangala.

I.R.D. = Imperial Record Department.

H.M. = Home Miscellaneous.

Abs. P.L.I. = Abstracts of Persian Letters issued.

C.P.C. = Calendar of Persian Correspondence.

Bl. St. Cons. = Bengal Secret Consultations.

I.H.E. = Interesting Historical Events.

B.E. = Basumati Edition.

T.S. = Typical Selections from Old Bengali Literature.

J.A.S.B. = Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

J.R.A.S. = Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

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STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF BENGAL SUBAH

CHAPTER I

SECTION I

Education : Ideas and Institutions.

Education dependent on private initiative and encouragement.

Life in every age and country varies greatly according to the education that men receive. In the times of which we are speaking, Bengal did not possess any organised system of University Education; there were neither any such traces of the good old days of Nālandā or Takṣaśilā nor any presages of the modern University Education. Education depended entirely upon private initiative and private arrangements, made largely under the patronage of the local Rajas and Chiefs, who encouraged learned men. Rāmeśvara wrote his Śivāyana in obedience to the orders of Rājā Yaśovanta of Burdwan;[1] Anantarāma composed his Kriyāyogasāra under the

[1] "Yaśovanta sarvaguṇavanta tasya poṣya Rāmeśvara tadāśraye kari ghara biracila Śiva-saṅkīrtana."

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orders of a noble man named Viśārada;[2] Dvija Bhavāṇī compiled his Rāmāyaṇa in the court of a prince named Jayacandra (who had his capital in a certain place near Noakhali) and got remuneration at the rate of Rs. 10 per day.[3] In order to encourage the cultivation of Sanskrit learning Raja Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadia fixed a monthly allowance of Rs. 200 to be paid as stipends to students who should come from distant places to

[2] The article "Bangabhāṣār upar Musalmāner prabhāb," by Dr. D. C. Sen in the "Vicitrā" of Māgha, 1335 B.S., p. 18. *Cf.* "The principal cause of the present neglected state of literature in India is to be traced to the want of that encouragement which was formerly afforded to it by princes, chieftains and opulent individuals under the native Government.

Such a review would bring before us the liberal patronage which was formerly bestowed not only by princes and others in power and authority but also by the Zemindars or persons who had distinguished themselves by the successful cultivation of letters at those places."—Lord Minto's Minute on Sanskrit Colleges in Tirhut and Nadiya, 6th March, 1811, Long, *Selections from Unpublished Records*, p. 554.

[3] "Jayacandra narapati Rāma itihāsa ati
Jatne se karila padabanda ।
Dvijavara Bhavāṇī āpanā sākṣāt āni,
Dine dine daśa mudrā dāna ।"

—Typical Selections from Old Bengali Literature, Part I, p. 583.

Compare the case of Rājā Jayanārāyaṇa translating the 'Kāśīkhaṇḍa' at an enormous cost in 1800 A.D.

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study in the *tols* of Nadiā.[4] It was under his patronage that Bhāratacandra wrote his 'Annadāmaṅgala' and Rāmaprasāda wrote his 'Kālīkīrtana' under the encouragement of Rājakiśora Mukhopādhyāya, a relative of Raja Kṛṣṇacandra.

Higher Hindu education.

The Hindus received their higher education in the Catuṣpāṭhīs, which could be found in many important towns or villages, and where the medium of instruction was Sanskrit. These Catuṣpāṭhīs were cosmopolitan in nature and welcomed teachers and scholars from different parts of the country. Rāmaprasāda has left a description of a Catuṣpāṭhī in Burdwan, where scholars from Drāviḍa, Utkala, Kāśī and Tirhut (Tīrabhukti or Mithilā) were assembled.[5] This further shows that Drāviḍa, Utkala, Kāśī and Tirhut were also centres of learning. Contemporary Literature supplies us with an account as to how a Sanskrit scholar had to pass through different stages in his educational career. His education generally commenced from his fifth year with a special auspicious ceremony and he was at first taught to practise letters; after the boy had a thorough acquaintance with the letters, he was introduced into the study of Grammar and works like Bhaṭṭīkāvyam, Raghuvaṁśam, Kumārasambhavam

[4] Calcutta Review, 1872, Vol. IV, pp. 103-04.

[5] Rāmaprasāda's Granthāvalī, p. 5 (Basumatī Edn.).

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and others ; after mastering these the young scholar had to devote himself to the study of Alaṅkāra; Logic formed the next subject of study in the curriculum. When the scholar had advanced up to the study of Logic and had become a little mature he had to study the science of astrology, the different systems of Philosophy including the Vedānta, and the Vedic Prosody as well.[6]

Side by side with this, scholars took interest in the study of vernacular literature and the names of Bhāratacandra, the court poet of Mahārājā Kṛṣṇacandra, of Rāmaprasāda Sena and of Rāmeśvara, the author of Śivāyana, have occupied important places in the history of Bengali literature. Almost about this time a few other valuable works were also produced in the Eastern part of Bengal. The writers of these works belonged to one and the same family and lived at Vikrampur (East Bengal). Of these Rāmagati Sena composed 'Māyātimiracandrikā' in Bengali and 'Yogakalpalatikā' in Sanskrit ; in 1772 A. D. Jayanārāyaṇa and his niece Ānandamayī

Study of vernacular literature.

[6] Rāmaprasāda's Granthāvalī, pp. 50-51 (Basumatī Edn.). We meet with similar descriptions in Mukundarāma's Kavikaṅkaṇa, Sāhitya Parisad Patrikā, No. 3, 1327 B.S. and in Mādhavācārya's Caṇḍī. The system described in Rādhāmādhava Ghoṣa's Bṛhatsārāvalī seems to be more or less traditional.—Typical Selections, etc., Part II, pp. 1893-1894.

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composed with mutual help the Bengali book, Harilīlā, and a few years later Jayanārāyaṇa independently produced a 'Candīkāvya' in Bengali.[7]

Primary Education.

We have no full knowledge of the exact curriculum of education in vernacular but we find that almost every important village had a pāṭhaśālā, where the students received elementary education in Arithmetic and in some of the rudiments of physical and natural sciences. Craufurd observed, "There are schools in all the towns and principal villages. The masters are Brahmans. The place where the boys are taught is generally a pandal, or a room made of leaves and leaves of the palm tree. The boy sits on mats on the floor. The books are of leaves. Those who write hold in the left hand the book and in the other a steel bodkin with which they make a slight impression on the leaf. But

[7] Baṅgabhāṣā o Sāhitya, p. 492. The author has mentioned a few other Bengali MSS. belonging almost to this period :—(1) Kāliyadamana, by Dvija Paraśurāma, 1761 A.D. (2) Kaṇvamunir pārāṇa, by Kṛṣṇadāsa. (3) Camatkāracandrikā, by Narottama Dāsa, 1145 B.S. (4) Manaśikṣā, by Girivara Dāsa, 1148 B.S. (5) Rāgamālā, by Narottama Dāsa, 1143 B.S. (6) Satyanārāyaṇa, by Dvija Rāmakṛṣṇa, 1141 B.S. (7) Sādhanakathā (prose work), 1158 B.S. (8) Sārasaṁgraha, by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, written 1185 B.S. (9) Harināmakavaca, by Gopikṛṣṇa Dāsa, 1165 B.S. (10) Hāṭabandanā, by Valarāma Dāsa, 1175 B.S.

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they frequently begin by making letters and figures with their finger on sand spread on the floor, and sometimes learn to calculate with small shells and pebbles."[8] Śubhaṅkara, the renowned Hindu Arithmetician, flourished either towards the later part of the 17th or the earlier part of the 18th century, and it is quite probable that his system was taught in the pāṭhaśālās (village schools) throughout the 18th century.[9] Mr. W. Adam, who had been commissioned by Bentinck in 1834-1835 to make a survey of education in Bengal, writes in his second report[10] :—"The only other written composition used in these schools and that only in the way of oral dictation by the master, consists of a few of the rhyming arithmetical rules of Śubhankara, a writer whose name is as familiar in Bengal as that of Cocker in England without anyone knowing who or what he was, or when he lived. It may be inferred that he lived or if not a real personage, that the rhymes bearing that name were composed before the establishment

[8] Sketches of the Hindoos, Vol. II, pp. 12-13. Compare an almost similar picture in Ward's History of the Hindoos, 1818 A.D., Vol. I, p. 119.

[9] Articles on "Śubhaṅkara" in "The Statesman," Sept. 9, 1928 and Octr. 2, 1928. I have collected two undated Bengali manuscripts of Śubhaṅkara's work; from handwriting it appears that they were probably written during the early part of the 19th century.

[10] I.R.D.

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of British rule in this country, and during the existence of the Musalman power, for they are full of Hindustani or Persian terms, and contain references to Muhammadan usages without the remotest allusion to English practices or modes of calculation.'' Sometimes, Arabic, Persian and Bengali were taught in one and the same pāṭhaśālā. There is a passage in the Bengali work *'Samaser Gāzir Puṁthi'* [11] which tells us that the Gazi kept 100 students in his *Tolbakhana*. He brought a Maulavi from Hindustan for teaching Arabic to the boys, a Paṇḍit from Jugdea for teaching Bengali, and a Munshi from Dacca for teaching Persian.

This vernacular education was widespread ; it appears that a sort of primary education was encouraged in every sphere of society, whether high or low, where people were glad and willing to enjoy its benefits and pleasures. Dr. D. C. Sen [12] says that he has in his possession a few Bengali manuscripts, belonging almost to this period (a few years before or after), which were written by men belonging to the lower strata of the society, —(*i*) *'Naiṣadha,' composed* by Lokanātha Datta, the manuscript being written by Mājhi Kāyet in 1768 A. D., (*ii*) Gaṅgādāsa Sena's *'Devayāṁī Upākhyāna,'* written by Rāmanārāyaṇa Gopa in

11 Typical Selections, etc., Part II, p. 1854.

12 Baṅgabhāṣā o Sāhitya, pp. 397 and 450.

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1778 A.D., (*iii*) '*Harivaṁśa*,' translated by Dvija Bhavānanda but written by Bhāgyamanta Dhupi in 1783 A. D., (*iv*) '*Kriyāyogasāra*,' translated from a portion of '*Padmapurāṇa*,' by Anantarāma Śarmā but written by Rāghavendra Rāja in 1731 A. D. Madhusūdana Nāpita, who wrote his work 'Nala-Damayantī' in 1809 A.D., mentions that both his father and grandfather were famous writers.[13] It is not possible to determine precisely the date of Madhusūdana's father and grandfather but when Madhusūdana could write in 1809 A.D., it seems quite possible that his grandfather had flourished towards the middle of the 18th century. There were other channels through which also the masses could receive a certain amount of enlightenment. Religious songs, saṅkīrtanas, popular tales and comic ballads were widely current in the society and always served to fill the minds of all classes of people with certain amount of ethical, aesthetic and intellectual tastes. These could be recited by men belonging to the lowest stratum of society with such an art as made it difficult to discriminate[14] between a man of

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 397. "It was possible for him, who was a servant of the Brahmins and was born in a barber family, to become a famous poet. His son Vāṇīnātha achieved renown throughout the world for his achievement, and his son and pupil Madhusūdana is glad at heart to hear of the glories of his master."

[14] "Even those who watch the cows think of Saṅ-

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letters and an illiterate man. It may be of interest to note that these men sought knowledge for religion, honest pleasure and for the uplift of the spiritual self and did not take to service by giving up their respective professions. Madhusūdana's grandfather did not give up his profession when he became a famous poet, and his literary grandson continued to be a barber.

I have studied a few Sanskrit and Bengali manuscripts[15] which throw some fresh light on our subject. All these were copied by one Vadanacandra Ghoṣa, an inhabitant of district Sudhārām.[16] These were all bound together in one volume, and look like a collection of text-books on different subjects. The second manuscript, which is in Sanskrit, is a book containing word-equivalents (a very ancient idea) for arithmetical numerals. There is no evidence as to the date of this work but it seems to have been composed long before the middle of the 19th century. It is

kīrtana ; it is very difficult to distinguish between a paṇḍit and a man of lower class (cāṣā).—Rāmaprasāda's Granthāvalī, p. 5, B. E.

[15] These manuscripts were discovered by me in the late Prof. J. N. Samaddar's collections, and I am highly indebted to his son Babu Makhanlal Samaddar, B.A., for his kindly permitting me to utilise these for my work.

[16] All the manuscripts end thus :—

"Āsalamatārtha nakala sākṣaranca Śrīvadanacandra Ghoṣa Śakāvdā 1773/1 san 1258/1 Vāṅgālā vatārikh 3 Jāiṣṭha mokām jelā Sudhārām."

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probable that such texts for teaching word-equivalents for numerals were studied in the middle of the 18th century: Bhāratacandra and others have given their dates in such words.[17] The third one is the famous book on Prosody named Śrūtabodha, by Kālidāsa. From the fact that it was copied as a school text so late as the middle of the 19th century it seems clear that scholars did not lose touch with it throughout the preceding, *i.e.*, the 18th century. The fourth one named Gaṅgādāsa-gītā is also a book on Prosody. From the first few lines of the book we know that it was written by a teacher Gaṅgādāsa for the benefit of young scholars.[18] We do not know the date of Gaṅgādāsa but from internal evidence in the text we gather that it was copied by one named Kāmadevaśarmā in 1651 Śakāvdā (*i.e.*, 1740 A.D.).[19] The fifth one named Bṛndāvanayamakam, which is a poem with a beautiful description of Bṛndāvana, was similarly copied first by Kāmadevaśarmā and recopied about 120 years later by

[17] "Vede laye ṛṣi base bramha nirupila।
Sei śake eai gīta Bhārata racila॥"

[18] "Devampraṇamya Gopālam Vaidya Gopāladāsaja santoṣātanayaśchandogagāṅgādāsatanotyeda santi yadyapi bhūāṁśaśchandograntha maṇiṣīnām tathāpisāramākriṣya navakārtha-mamodyama."

[19] The date of Kāmadevaśarmā has been clearly given at the end of manuscript No. 6 (Aṣmaviveka):—"Śrīkāmadeva Śarmaṇa pustakamidam tatsākṣaranca śuvamastu Śakāvdā 1651/6/29."

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Vadanacandra Ghoṣa.[20] The sixth one named Aṣmaviveka (or 'Blockheads quickened'), by Gadasiṁha was also first copied by Kāmadevaśarmā and then recopied by Vadanacandra Ghoṣa. This work was intended to teach the boys the easy method of learning how to avoid mistakes in the spelling of words,—words beginning with or characterised by a particular letter being grouped together. Here words with 'Ṣ'[21] 'Ś'[22] 'S'[23] and 'ha'[24] have been arranged together. On the strength of the fact that these works, copied by Kāmadevaśarmā in 1651 Śakāvdā (*i.e.*, 1730 A.D.), were recopied 120 years later by Vadanacandra, it may be asserted that these were studied with much care and interest by young Sanskrit students (*cf.* navakārtham mamodyama in MS. No. 4 and Śiśubodhaye kathayāmi in MS. No. 6) during the period intervening between Kāmadeva and Vadanacandra. This also shows that the Sanskrit teachers

[20] Vadanacandra copied the MS. No. 4 on the 18th Vaiśākha, 1258 B.S. and MS. No. 5 on the 22nd Vaiśākha, 1258 B.S. This shows the educational zeal of the person as well as the importance of the subjects copied.

[21] "Iti Gadasiṁha viracita Usyaviveka tālavśyakārakathām samāptam."

[22] "Iti murdhanyaṣkāra kathanam samāptam."

[23] "Iti danteyesakāra prakaraṇa samāptam."

[24] "Iti Śrīgadasiṁhaviracitāṣmaviveke hakāra kathanam samāptam."

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of Bengal then took great pains in rewriting difficult Sanskrit texts for the benefit and convenience of young scholars. There is another manuscript which is a Bengali translation of Bhagavatīgītā (Chaps. 15-19) included in the Mahābhāgavatapurāṇa. This manuscript does not bear the date of original translation, but from the concluding lines we know that the translator's name was Rāmaratana and that he was an inhabitant of Pāṭuliā in the Nadia district.[25] It was copied by the same Vadanacandra which shows that it was at any rate translated before his days. Thus the Vernacular renderings of the Purāṇas greatly popularised their study, by bringing them within the easy reach of ordinary readers. Rāmaratana says that after labouring hard (day and night) for a month, he had finished his work which he regarded as an act of great piety and as a sure

[25] "Nadiyā nāmete jilā tāhe thānā sunirmalā
hmāḍāya āche vartamāna,
tāhāra sāmila grāma sarvamānyajanadhāma
Pāṭuliā nṛpatira sthāna
Dharmadātā Harināma āmāra vasatidhāma
purvāpara ei sthāna pāiyā
Varendra bhumira vāsa vahudina hai nāśa
navamapuruṣa āmā diā
tāhādera nāma jata tāhā āra kava kata
varendra kulete janma hai
Śrī Rāmaratana nāma haribhaktimanaskāma
devīgītā bhāṣāpadyekaya."

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means of getting rid of the burdens of this world. Thus we see that men acting under religious convictions and with spiritual motives indirectly helped the cause of education. There is another manuscript named Yamasaṅgītā which treats of the philosophy of human life. Here we meet with a vivid description of a man's course of life—his birth in this world—his growth into youth and manhood,—his corruption in this world and utter neglect of religion and ultimately his dark fate and cruel torture in the hands of Yamarāja (the God of Death). Like the other manuscripts it was copied by Vadanacandra but we know from the concluding lines that the author's name was Śaṅkaradāsa.[26] The last but a very important one named Bhūgolavarṇanā is a book on History and Geography. It deals with the Geography of the World in a synoptic and traditional Purāṇic manner and is a summary text-book of the History of India drawn up in the same Purāṇic manner from the earliest times down to 1820 A.D., when it was last brought up to date, previous concluding dates traceable in the text being well known landmarks in the early 19th and middle of 18th centuries.[27]

[26] "Gurukṛṣṇa Vaiṣṇavapada śirete dhariā kahen Śaṅkaradāsa minati kariyā."

[27] "Tāhārapara eai Kalikātārājadhānite Ingreji 1733 san avadhi vartamāna 1820 paryanta je je Governor arthāt baḍasāheb haiāche tāhār vivaraṇa nīce likhitechi."

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Among the places where the study of Sanskrit and Vernacular literature was encouraged, Nadiā, "the Oxford of the province," occupied the prominent position. "In truth Nadiya was the focus of intellectual development, the land of the Naiyāyikas who reasoned and argued on every conceivable topic, the abode of astronomers, whose *pañjikas* and almanacs still regulate the festivals and Pujas and the daily domestic concerns of the Hindus." [28] Mahārājā Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā was himself a lover of art and literature and his court was adorned by a number of intellectual luminaries (about 80), proficient in the different branches of knowledge. The name of Bhāratacandra has already been mentioned. The Mahārājā himself had a fair knowledge of Sanskrit and often engaged himself in the discussion of the subtle problems of Logic with Harirāma Tarkasiddhānta, Kṛṣṇānanda Vācaspati and Rāmagopāla Sārvabhauma; he tried to find out the truths of religion along with Prāṇanātha Nyāyapañcānana, Gopāla Nyāyālaṅkāra and Rāmānanda Vācaspati, and he was able to talk with Jīvarāma Vācaspati, Rāmaballabha Vidyāvāgīśa, and Vīreśvara Nyāyapañcānana about philosophy. Vāṇeśvar was his poet-laureate, along with whom he tried to compose Sanskrit verses.[29] The

Important centres of learning.

[28] Calcutta Review, 1872, Vol. IV, p. 97.

[29] Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita, p. 49.

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celebrated astronomer Rāmarudra Vidyānidhi flourished in his court and wrote his famous work Sārasaṁgraha.[30] Ward, writing about 1818 A.D., speaks of a few other important centres of Sanskrit learning,[31] *e.g.*, at Vāṅśaveriā there were 12 or 14 colleges in all of which the Nyāya philosophical works were almost exclusively studied. In the towns of Triveṇī, Kumārahaṭṭa and Bhāṭapāḍā there were perhaps 7 or 8 similar schools. Gondalpāḍā and Bhadreśvar contained each about 10 Nyāya schools. At Jayanagara and Majilapura 17 or 18 similar schools could be found, at Andula 10 or 12, and at Bāli and in several other towns 2, 3 or 4.

In Orissa a somewhat similar spirit of education and culture was in existence. Among the poets of Orissa who flourished during this age, the names of Upendra Bhañja, Rāmadāsa, Kṛṣṇa Siṁha, Sadānanda Kavisuryabrahma, Abhimanyu Sāmanta Siṁha and Braja Nātha Barajena, deserve mention. We have their writings in Oriya Vernacular Literature but some of them possessed knowledge in other provincial vernaculars too. Abhimanyu Sāmanta Siṁha "was a man of good education and knew Sanskrit, Marathi, Hindi and Bengali."[32] "His famous work Vidagdha Cintāmaṇi was

[30] Vijayarāma's Tīrthamaṅgala, pp. 202-03.

[31] History of the Hindoos, Vol. I, p. 594.

[32] Introduction to the Typical Selections from Oriya Literature, Vol. II, p. xxvi.

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modelled after the Sanskrit work Vidagdha Mādhava, of the neo-Vaiṣṇavite school."[33] His juvenile works are (*i*) Sulakṣaṇā, (*ii*) Premacintāmaṇi, (*iii*) Rasavatī, (*iv*) Prematarañgiṇī and (*v*) Premakalā and he began to compose verses when "he was quite a child."[34] Upendra Bhañja, who commenced his literary career by about the beginning of the 18th century, had also some though not a very sound education in Sanskrit.[35] The writings of Rāmadāsa, the author of Dādhyātaka Bhakti, "disclose a degeneration of the Bhakti cult and morality finds no place in this religion of Bhakti. The lives of saints recorded in this book teach the curious lesson, that immoral acts are of no consequence if they are committed to entertain a guest, or to have a vision of God."[36]

Persian education.

Education in Persian was apparently in a flourishing condition. For the Muhammadan people this was the only important medium through which they could receive education, and the Hindus as well sought to acquire some knowledge of Persian. As the language of the rulers, Persian had become the official language of the day, and many of the notable Hindus learnt Persian for securing posts

[33] *Ibid.*
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid*, p. xxv.

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under the Government.[37] With this object Rāmaprasāda Sena was sent by his father to a Maulavi, where by virtue of his superior intellect, he mastered Persian within a short time. A study of the chapter on "Mādhava Bhāṭa's journey to Kāñcīpura" in Rāmaprasāda's Vidyāsundara supplies us with some examples of his knowledge of Persian and Urdu.[38] Such was the case with Bhāratacandra also.[39] At the age of fourteen, when he had acquired a good knowledge of Sanskrit and had married a girl of an Ācāryya family of the village Sāradā near Tājpur in the Maṇḍalghāṭ paragana, his elder brothers rebuked him much for his wholesale devotion to the study of Sanskrit to the exclusion of Persian, the knowledge of which might stand him in a good stead in his practical life. This rebuke proved to be a blessing in disguise for him, as he soon went to the house of Rāmacandra Munsi, a Hindu Kāyastha of Devānandapura to the west of

[37] Introduction to the works of Rāmaprasāda Sena (B.E.); Navyabhārata, 1293 B. S. of the month of Agrahāyaṇa.

[38] Rāmaprasāda's Vidyāsundara, p. 3 (B.E.).

[39] "Yadi kiñcit tvam vadasi darajāne mana āyātkhosi Āmār hṛdaye vase prema kara khoṣa hoyke."

These two lines form part of a poem composed by Bhāratacandra in the mixed languages of Bengali, Sanskrit, Persian and Hindi (Works of Bhāratacandra, p. 181, B.E.).

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Vāṅśaverīā in the district of Hugli and very soon acquired a good knowledge of Persian.[40] It is quite possible that there were others also belonging to the Hindu community in the different villages of Bengal, who had learnt Persian like Rāmacandra Munsi. Narasiṁha Vasu, the author of a Bengali work named Dharmamaṅgala, possessed a good knowledge of Persian[41] and Rājā Navakṛṣṇa of Śobhābāzār was Persian teacher to Warren Hastings in 1750 A. D.[42] The author of the Seir-ul-Mutakherin remarks "that Raja Kyretchand having some knowledge of grammar and syntax wrote Persian more correctly and more elegantly than falls to the lot of Gentoos (Hindus)."[43] Allāhvardi "preferred the service of Gentoos in every office and dignity of the state, excepting in the ranks of the army..."[44] But these Hindu officers could not have worked satisfactorily in the different departments of the state, unless they

[40] Introduction to the Works of Bhāratacandra, B.E.

[41] Typical Selections, etc., Part I, p. 456.

[42] Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1843, Vol. 7, p. 2200. *Cf.* "Śrī Śrī Mahārāja Bhupa Bāhādurera vālya kāla atita haiā kiśora kāla haihai pārsī bāṅgālāte sacchande or khoskhat akṣar haila....." Extract from Rājopākhyāna, by Jayanātha Ghoṣa, Typical Selections, etc., Part II, p. 1677.

[43] Vol. II, p. 114 (Cambray Edn.). Kyretchand was son of Rayrayan Alamchand.

[44] Orme's History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan, Vol. II, p. 53.

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had some knowledge of Persian. Thus we see that the knowledge of Persian had become a practical necessity for the Hindus of those days.

The Nawabs and the Muhammadan grandees were not devoid of a love of knowledge, and many of them were patrons of Persian language and literature. The Seir-ul-Mutakherin has supplied us with a list of learned men in the court of Allāh-vardi :[45] (1) Maulavi or Doctor Nassyr, a native of Shahpara and descendant of Shems-eddin " the complaint-promoter, whose tomb and monument are in great repute in the province of Oudh," (2) Daud-ali Khan, better known under the name of Zair-hossein-Khan, (3) Mir Mahmed Alim, one of the most virtuous and most venerable persons of Azimabad (Patna), as well as a disciple of Mirza-moezmoosevi-Khan, the poet, (4) Maulavi or Doctor Mahmed-arif, (5) Mirrustam Ali, (6) Shah-Mahmed-amin, who lived in celibacy, " a man much versed in the sense of the Coran and so very intelligent as to be inferior only to an angel,"[2] (7) Shah-adhem, (8) Haiat-beg, (9) Shah-qhyzyr, a religious man of great distinction who lived in Sadpur, a town of the district Besarah, (10) Sayyid-mir-Mahmed-Sedjad, or Mir-Mahmed, the Persoterner, who was a man of high virtues and merit,

[45] Seir-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. II, pp. 165-75. Compare a similar account of the court of Nawab Safdar Jang in contemporary Oudh given in the same work.

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Famous Persian scholars at Patna.

(11) Syed-alim-ullah, the grandfather of the author of the Seir-ul-Mutakherin, (12) Shah-haideri, a maternal uncle to Gulam Husain's paternal grandfather. This man died at Monghyr during the Nawabship of Mir Kasim. As in the case of Sanskrit education the premier place was occupied by Nadiā, so in the case of Persian education the prominent place was occupied by Azimabad, though there were other less important centres of Persian education throughout Behar and Bengal. We have Gulam Husain Khan's testimony to this fact. He says, "There were in those times at Azimabad number of persons who loved science and learning and employed themselves in teaching and in being taught ; and I remember to have seen in that city and its environs nine or ten professors of repute and three or four hundred students and disciples from whence may be conjectured the number of those that must have been in the great towns or the retired districts. Amongst those that flourised in the town of Behar, the Kazi Gulam Muzaffar, better known under the title of Muzaffar Ali Khan, was personally known to Allāhvardi, who appointed him to the office of supreme judge of Murshidabad."[45a] It was at this time that a number of men of merit and knowledge came to Hiudusthan from Iran and settled particularly in

[45a] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 175.

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Behar and Azimabad.[45b] The important ones among them were (1) Mahomed-el Medoo Bed Ali of whom the author of the Seir-ul-Mutakherin remarks : "what subtility could be pointed out in the whole circle of science which he did not unfold, and amongst mazes and depths of Astrology, in what part was he not thoroughly versed," [46] (2) Shah-Mahmed-Hussain, (3) Sayyid Mahmed Ali, (4) Haji Bediuddin.

It is important for our purpose to know what the standard of education imparted through Persian was, and what the institutions and methods were through which it was imparted. Haji Mustafa, the translator of the Seir-ul-Mutakherin, has pointed out that the education of which the author of the Seir-ul-Mutakherin speaks so much perhaps included chiefly the study of Persian literature and Islamic theology. But this did not make up the entire curriculum. The author has every now and then referred to the cultivation of science and astrology.[47] It may

[45b] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 175-85. A detailed account of each of these men is available in these few pages.

[46] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 176. This seems to be an exaggerated estimate of the man. However, we can safely assert that he was a man of erudition.

[47] Seir-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. II, p. 300. But astrology had ceased to be studied in a really critical spirit and the forms and ceremonies of it made people extremely superstitious.—Scrafton, Reflections on the Government of Indostan, pp. 16-17.

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be reasonably supposed that the students received a sort of rudimentary knowledge in science through those theological studies ; the science of medicine was specially studied by many of them. But it is difficult to assert that the standard of education in the Muhammadan society in general was quite satisfactory. In this respect, Scrafton [48] has given a description which, though not true to the letter, cannot be ignored as entirely false. He writes, " Till the age of five or six, the boys of rank and family are left entirely to the eunuchs and women and from the fondness and tenderness of their management they first acquire a delicacy of constitution, a timidity and an early tendency to the pleasures of the seraglio. They are then provided with Tutors to teach them the Persian and Arabic languages ; and, at this early age, they are brought into company where they are taught to behave with great gravity and circumspection, to curb every motion of impatience, learn all the punctilious ceremonies of the eastern courts, to say their prayer in public and every devotion of exterior and it is astonishing to see how well a boy of eight or nine years old will acquit himself in company. They are also taught to ride and the use of arms, and are furnished with their shield and sabre and a little dagger at their waist

[48] *Ibid.*, pp. 20-22.

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which is called cuttary, the principal use of which is to stab on occasion. When the hours of school and company are past they return to the seraglio and the parents never scruple to admit them to all their plays and diversions, at which are exhibited representations of everything that is beastly and unnatural, not in a manner to excite horror but merely to afford diversion. Nothing ever shocked me more than to see the insensibility of parents, in reposing such scenes to the tender minds of their children. The slaves and women of the seraglio wait with impatience the first appearance of desire to debauch them, unknown to the parents and this manner of education continues till 13 or 14 ; then they consummate their marriages which are made by their parents in their infancy and a separate household is formed for them."

However, institutions for their education were not wanting. Gulam Husain has given us an account of a large number of students engaged in studies at Azimabad and elsewhere.[49] There was not a mosque or imambarah in which professors of Arbic and Persian were not maintained. Maktabs sprang up wherever Musalmans predominated in number.[50] While describing the state of indigenous education prior to 1835 Dr. Hamilton

[49] Seir-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. I, p. 175.

[50] Education Commission Report of the Bengal Provincial Committee, paragraphs 183-184.

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Buchanan mentions in his journals a large number of Arabic and Persian schools in different parts of Behar.

We do not know it for certain whether the people of Bengal were at this time anxious to learn any European language. Edward Ives writes : " Although there are many schools for the education of children, yet they seldom learn more than their mother tongue. It is indeed surprising considering the great number of English that are settled amongst them and with whom they have continual dealings that they should not be able in common to speak our language so well as the people near the seaports of Madagascar." [51] But there were a few at least who learnt English language, more or less, through some means. After reading Sanskrit and Persian, Rāmanidhi Gupta (popularly known as Nidhu Bābu) read English with a Christian missionary.[52] It is possible that Itsāmuddin, the author of *Sagarfnamah*, who was sent with a letter of representation to George III in England by Emperor Shah Alam after the Dewani, *i.e.*, in the year 1766, knew English ; otherwise he would not have ventured to undertake such a task.[52a] Most probably some of the Christian missionaries were trying about this time to teach English to the (native) 'charity boys.' In 1754 one

[51] Edward Ives' Voyage, p. 29.

[52] Nārāyaṇa, Jaiṣṭha, 1323 B.S., p. 739.

[52a] Kujhuā Library copy of the manuscript.

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missionary named Mr. Mapleloft petitioned to the Council in Calcutta :—" We flatter ourselves this application will not appear unreasonable to you as it must be very evident that children well educated and instructed in the English language and accounts, may hereafter be of great service not only to the Gentleman of that place, but also to the Honourable Company." [53]

Female education was not unknown to the age. Vidyā, the heroine of Bhāratacandra's as well as Rāmaprasāda's Vidyāsundara, has been pictured as a woman possessed of good education.[54] Her education, as it has been said, was so high that it enabled her to proclaim that she would marry him only, who could overpower her in debates.[55] Ānandamayī, the niece of the poet Jayanārāyaṇa, was a poetess of fair repute and composed Harilīlā in 1772 along with her uncle. Ānandamayī was married at the age of nine to Ajodhyārāma Sena,

[53] Long's Selections from the Unpublished Records of the Government, Vol. I, pp. 48-49.

[54] " The high-minded Virasiṁha became deeply anxious in heart as to how he could find a suitable match for his daughter, who was the best of all in beauty, qualities, pedigree and behaviour, and especially who was always victorious in intellectual discussions."—Works of Rāmaprasāda Sena, p. 3 (B.E.).

[55] " She vowed that she would marry him only who would overpower her in arguments and debates."—Works of Bhāratacandra, p. 63 (B.E.).

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the son of Kavibhūṣaṇa Rūparāma, of the village of Payagrāma, in 1761 A.D. Ajodhyārāma was highly proficient in Sanskrit, but the fame of his wife's intellectual attainments had marred his repute. Harideva Tarkālaṅkāra, the son of the well-known Kṛṣṇadeva Vidyāvāgīśa of Rājanagara, wrote out for Ānandamayī a treatise in Sanskrit on the worship of Śiva. As the work contained some mistakes, here and there, she abused Vidyāvāgīśa Mahāśaya for his being negligent of his son's studies. Rājavallabha wrote to Rāmagati Sena asking for proofs of "*Agniṣtoma*" sacrifice and a diagram of the sacrificial altar, but as Rāmagati Sena was then very busy, these directions were written out by Ānandamayī herself and were sent to Rājavallabha.[56] Rāṇī Bhavāṇī of Natore was, like Ahalyā Bāi of Indore, a well-educated lady.[57] Ward wrote in 1818 A.D. that, a few years ago, there lived at Benares a female philosopher named Hati Vidyālaṅkāra. "She was born in Bengal; her father and husband were Kulin Brahmins;...the husband of Hati actually left her a widow. Her father also died; and she therefore fell into great distress. In these circumstances like many others who became disgusted with the world, she went to reside at Benares.

[56] Translated from D. C. Sen's Vaṅgabhāṣā o Sāhitya, p. 494 (4th Edition).

[57] Calcutta Review, 1872.

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Here she pursued learning afresh, and after acquiring some knowledge of the law books and other Shastras, she began to instruct others, and obtained a number of pupils, so that she was universally known by the name of Hati Vidyālaṅkāra, *i.e.*, ornamented with learning." [58] The wife of Yaśovanta Rāya, a Brahmin of Nāśīpur, understood Bengali accounts and the wives of Rājā Navakṛṣṇa were famed for being able to read.[59] Many female mendicants among the Vairāgiṇīs and Sannyāsinīs had some knowledge of Sanskrit and a still greater number were conversant with the popular poetry in the dialects of the country.[60] Muhammadan women also were given some amount of education.[61] There flourished in Orissa, a few years later, a poetess of the name of Rāṇī Nissanka Rāi.[62] Thus we see plainly enough that the women of the age were not universally

[58] History of the Hindoos, Vol. I, p, 699. For similar other instances *vide* B. N. Banerjee's Saṁbādapatre sekalera kathā and Sītānātha Tattvabhuṣana's Social Reform in Bengal.

[59] Ward, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 699. [60] *Ibid.*

[61] "This man who had been bred in the house of Seradjeddoulla's father and in that of Alyvardy Khan's consort ; who had made his fortune by marrying an *orphan virgin in whose education* that unfortunate grandmother had taken pleasure."—Seir-ul-Mutakherin, Vol. II, p. 242.

[62] Majumdar's Typical Selections from Oriya Literature, Vol. II, Introduction.

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steeped in the darkness of ignorance; in the distant corners of the villages there flourished female poets and writers, who can be regarded as worthy predecessors of their more educated sisters of the present day. It is not certain if there were any special institutions or arrangements for the education of the girls or whether they received their education in the same institutions with the boys.[63] Most probably, the education of the girls was more a matter of private than public concern, as the age required them to be "ministering angels" rather than fair statesmen or orators, though we shall see that some of them were concerned in matters of state as well. It was under tutors, employed by their parents at home, that the girls received their education, which aimed chiefly at equipping them with the knowledge and materials necessary for an honest and happy domestic life in the world.

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[63] We find instances of girls reading in the same institutions with the boys during the early 19th century. Autobiography of Rāsasundarī in D. C. Sen's Typical Selections, etc., Part II, p. 1768.

Section II

Position of Women.

We have certain references about the position of women in the works of contemporary European writers. Mr. Dow writes in his 'Hindustan' :— "Women are so sacred in India, that even the common soldiery leave them unmolested in the midst of slaughter and devastation. The Harem is a sanctuary against all the licentiousness of victory; and ruffians covered with the blood of a husband, shrink back with confusion from the secret apartments of his wives."[1] Verelst, on the other hand, has drawn quite a contrary picture of the women of the age ; but his conclusion seems to have been based more or less on isolated instances or practices amongst certain classes, rather than on a general and accurate survey of the social conditions of the whole country. He writes, "Women in the East are transferred with little ceremony, and whether they be wives or concubines, the men seldom await their consent. Were our laws of rape and rules of evidence enforced, one half of the males would incur the

Remarks of contemporary European writers like Dow and Verelst.

[1] Quoted by Verelst in his "View of the Rise, Progress, etc., of Bengal," p. 138.

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penalty of death."[2] He cites in his favour the case of Mir Jafar presenting Clive with many of Sirajuddowlah's women after the latter's defeat at the hands of the English. But the circumstances under which these women were presented were apparently unusual, for though Mir Jafar had been placed on the *masnad* of Bengal, still in reality he was busy in gaining the favour of Clive, to whose hands the key of the political destiny of Bengal had already been transferred. Moreover, Mir Jafar was himself a weak-minded moral wretch,[3] and his treatment of women must have been something different from that of an ordinary man with some ideas of morality in him. We have other instances which would show that "women in the East" were not "transferred with little ceremony." Sarfaraz Khan had to suffer in the long run for his having a look at the newly-married daughter-in-law of Jagat Seth,[4] and Sirajuddowlah was also amply paid back for his lust for Tārāsundarī,

Women not "transferred with little ceremony,"—cases of Sarfaraj and Siraj.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 141.

[3] "Towards the close of Nawab Mahabet Jung's rule, Mirjafar kept two women named Muni Begum and Baboo Begum. He loved them passionately but through fear of Aly Verdy kept the matter concealed."—Khulāsat-ut-Tarwārikh.

[4] Stewart's History of Bengal, p. 495.

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the daughter of Rānī Bhāvānī.[5] Verelst has again pointed out that "in the year 1762, a native detected one of his women in an act of infidelity. Throughout the East, women are wholly subject to the will of their masters and every husband is the avenger of his own wrongs. The man, therefore, satisfied of her guilt, proceeded to punishment by cutting off her nose. He was arraigned at the Calcutta Sessions. He confessed that he had done nothing to offend the laws and customs in which he had been educated; that the woman was his property; and that, by such customs, he had a right to set a mark upon her, for her infamy; that he had never heard of the laws by which they tried him; did they believe that if he had known the punishment to be death, he would ever have committed what they call crimes?"[6] But instead of proving that the women were generally condemned to a very ignoble state of existence, this statement of Verelst shows that the laws of the country were severe for those women, who

[5] Akṣaya Kumāra Maitra's Sirajuddowlah, pp. 80-81. The author writes in the foot-note that this story was collected from the late Rājā Umeścandra of Barānagar and has been published by a noted writer Viṣṇucaraṇa Caṭṭopādhyāya, in the old monthly magazine 'Navyabhārata' of 1298 B. S.; 'Sāhitya,' Māgha, 1304 B. S.

[6] View of the Rise, Progress, etc., p. 25.

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Strength of conjugal fidelity,—severe punishment for adultery.

committed any act of adultery or infidelitly, in which cases the punishment could go even up to mutilation.[7] The man, when brought before the Calcutta Sessions, was really surprised to hear of a new kind of law, which did not allow him to inflict a heavy punishment on an adulterous and faithless wife. Of course, this sort of punishment by mutilation must have been inflicted only in exceptional cases. Even in these days of advanced civilisation such cases sometimes occur, when wives guilty of a serious breach of marital morality are subjected to heavy corporal punishments by their husbands, but that does not prove that in the present age the women are universally treated with cruelty and inhumanity.

The several dark female characters, which the writers of the age have drawn,[8] were, in the opinion

[7] "About this time a Brahmin of Sāntipur was accused before Rājā Kṛṣṇacandra of illicit intercourse with a daughter of a shoemaker. The Rājā excommunicated him from the society, and in spite of his appeal to the Nawab, the latter could not regain his former status."—Calcutta Review, Vol. VI, p. 417.

"In 1807 the 'Tapta mukti' or ordeal by hot clarified butter took place before 7,000 spectators, of a young woman accused by her husband of adultery." C. R., Vol. VII, p. 423.

[8] Hīrā in Bhāratacandra's Vidyāsundara; Vidu Brāhmaṇī in Rāmaprasāda's Vidyāsundara, and others.

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of Dr. D. C. Sen,[9] representations of persons tainted more or less with foreign influence, and he has supported his statement by two quotations from '*Laylāmajnu*.'[10] But this is hardly a strong support for the learned Dr. Sen's theory,—it lacks positive and direct evidence in its favour. These might have been, more probably, representations of persons contaminated by the evil influences of the popular Sahajiyā cult,[11] or the practices of the degenerated Tantric worship.

There is no doubt that "women were wholly subject to the will of their master." They were generally guided by the dictates of their husbands, and could not interfere in anything without their consent.[12] They were kept confined within the limits of their houses and were not allowed to expose themselves publicly. Verelst writes: "the confinement of women is a law that cannot be changed. Throughout India the practice most certainly prevails, and is closely connected with

Dependence of women on husbands.

[9] *Baṅgabhāṣā o Sāhitya*, pp. 461-62.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*, pp. 27-28 (Basumati Edition).

[12] "For a chaste woman her husband is the only support in this world."—Bhāratacandra, *Gopāla Uḍera Gāna*, p. 229 (B.E.); "the life of a woman is not good; she is always dependent and has to bear the burden of others."—*Ibid*, p. 222.

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the manner and religion of the people. The Hindu not less than the Mahomedan dreads the exposal of his women as the worst dishonour." [13] Appearance of women in public, with bare faces or heads was highly censured, and they were always expected to be modest and gentle in their habits and demeanour. Their husbands were all in all to them, and devoid of their husband's protection, there was no other place on earth where they could lead their lives honourably and happily, not even in their paternal homes.[14] They could not go to their father's house without the consent of their husband. In a contemporary Bengali manuscript, named '*Bhavāṇīmaṅgala*" by Gaṅgānārāyaṇa, the poet indirectly hints at this feature of the social life of the day. We find there that Girirāja expressed a keen desire to take Gaurī to his house and said, " My daughter, do what you now think

[13] Verelst, *op. cit.*, p. 138. " How is it that in our society a young woman is not veiled." Rāmaprasāda's *Padāvalī*, p. 115 (B.E.) ; Grose, *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 240.

[14] " You would go to your father's house in the hope of having your mother's love, but your sister-in-law will always want to drive you away ; the father does not make any enquiries, nor does the mother speak sweetly, if they find (their daughter) unfortunate in her marital relations."—'*Jayāra Upadeśa*' in Bhāratacandra's *Annadāmaṅgala*, p. 26 (B.E.).

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proper." At this Gaurī replied that she could not go without Śiva's consent; quite evidently, Śiva, Gaurī, Girirāja and Menakā, of Bengali religious poetry of the 18th century, are reflections of the average son-in-law, daughter and parents-in law of actual contemporary Bengali society.[15]

Women occasionally took part in political and administrative affairs.

Sometimes, however, the women could rise above this state of dependence, and could take serious and prominent part in politics and in the general administration of the estates and affairs entrusted to their care. Rāṇī Bhavāṇī,[16] whose name has become a by-word for charity and generosity, was the most prominent figure among this class of women. As a zamindar, she was very strong and assertive, and was known for her impartial administration of justice. Her attempts for the spread of education, her love for the country and her skill in administration, her piety and affection for the poor, have made her name immortal among her countrymen. The temples that were built under

[15] The manuscript "*Bhavāṇīmaṅgala*," by Gaṅgānārāyaṇa is one of the most valuable works of that age. It has been preserved with much care in the Ratan Library at Suri by Babu Sivaratan Mitra, who took great pains in restorting it.

[16] "Rani Bhavani is a heroine among the Bengalees."—H. Beveridge. Compare Ahalyā Bāi in contemporary Indore.

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her care and patronage, have elicited admiration from foreign travellers.[17] Tradition says that once Narendranārāyaṇa Rāya, father of Bhāratacandra, used some abusive terms about Mahārāṇī Viṣṇukumārī, mother of Mahārājā Kīrticandra of Burdwan, in connection with a dispute regarding a plot of land ; highly incensed at this, the Mahārāṇī ordered two of her Rajput generals, named Ālamcandra and Kṣemacandra, either to kill the infant son of Narendra Rāya or to occupy Bhūrsūṭ for her during that night. In obedience to her commands, the generals, with 10,000 ten thousand soldiers, occupied the fort of Bhavāṇīpura as well as the fort of Peḍo (the abode of Narendranārāyaṇa). Next morning Viṣṇukumārī personally proceeded to the fort of Peḍo and, after showing proper respect to the women and the priests and making suitable arrangements for the worship of the local deity, returned to Burdwan.[18] We meet with a similar picture of a lady zamindar elsewhere. Devī

[17] "Baranagar is famous as the place where Rani Bhavani spent the last years of her life, and where she died. She built some remarkable temples here. In size or shape, they are ordinary enough, but two of them are richly ornamented with terracotta tiles, each containing figures of Hindu gods very excellently modelled, and in perfect preservation."—H. Beveridge.

[18] Introduction to Bhāratacandra's works published by the New Victoria Press.

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Simha, a zamindar in a part of Rungpur, had become so oppressive that the other zamindars and his own ryots revolted against him. The leader of this revolt, as the poet-chronicler says, was a woman-zamindar of the name of Jayadurgā Caudhurāṇī.[19] We meet with a few such characters amongst Muhammadan women also. "The exhortations of Doordaneh Begum, the wife of Murshidkuli, the Governor of Orissa, to fight against Aly Verdy, as well as the appearance of the Begum of Aly Verdy with Aly Verdy on the battlefield, show that the Muhammadan ladies also took part in politics and state affairs, and that they had not all succumbed to the prevalent form of seclusion. Aly Verdy's Begum played the role of a supreme political officer in Bengal whilst her husband fought the battles with the Maharattas." [20] She encouraged her husband

[19] D. C. Sen's *Typical Selections from Old Bengali Literature*, Part II, pp. 1413-18: "The leader of this conspiracy was Jayadurgā Caudhurāṇī, a woman of much intelligence and spirit....."—*Ibid.* We can compare with this the character of Devī Caudhurāṇī, who took the leadership of a native revolt against the Company, in the days of Warren Hastings. Hastings had at first thought too lightly of her movements, but when her soldiers attacked the house of a rich merchant in Calcutta, he was awakened to the seriousness of the rising and took proper measures for its suppression.—*Sāhitya*, Jaiṣṭha issue, 1305 B.S.

[20] *Ryaz-us-salatin*, p. 329, footnote 1; Stewart,

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when the latter had given way to despair owing to the treachery of his Afghan generals and the death of Haji Ahmad and Zainuddin.[21] Holwell writes about her: "A woman whose wisdom, magnanimity, benevolence, and every amiable quality, reflected high honor on her sex and station; she much influenced the usurper's Councils, and was consulted by him in every material movement in the state except when sanguinary and treacherous measures were judged necessary, which he knew she would oppose as she ever condemned them when perpetrated however successful, predicting always that such policies would end in the ruin of his family."[22] Thus, in the "world's broad field" and "in the bivouac of life," the women of the age could sometimes stand side by side with the men; they were not only angels of service at home but were also active participators in the conflicts abroad.

The art of music was cultivated by them.[23] They

History of Bengal, p. 511. Zebunnisa, the Begum of Nawab Shujauddin, took an active part in the Government of her husband. It was she who invested Allahvardi with a khelyat and with the patent for the Deputy-Governorship of Behar.—*Seir-ul-mutakherin*, Vol. I, p. 282.

[21] Holwell, I. H. E., p. 170; *Seir-ul-mutakherin*, Vol. II, p. 11. [22] I.H.E., pp. 170-71.

[23] "After combing her hair and putting on a fine dress, she engaged herself in witty jestings, and in singing songs with her companions."—Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, p. 167 (B.E.); Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 39.

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played on musical instruments and their songs were sung in tune with these.[24]

Music among women.

At a marriage ceremony the women had to sing some auspicious songs in connection with several women's rites, and this required no doubt practice and general cultivation of music to a certain standard.[25] The fact that Ānandamayī, who belonged to this age, could herself compose the opera "*Umāra Vivāha*," adds further evidence of musical training amongst women. The musical instruments used at that time, were '*rabāb*,' '*tānpurā*,' '*vīṇā*' (lute), '*moracaṅgā*' and '*mandirā*,' '*kapināsa*, '*saptasvarā*' (a kind of lute) and '*parivādinī vīṇā*.'[26]

In family life, the mistress of the household occupied a very important position. A good and pious mistress served as a ministering angel to her family and a bad and impious one was an evil

[24] "At Vidyā's words her companions began singing songs and playing on musical instruments."—Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, p. 79 (B.E.).

[25] "Go and invite the women of the locality for celebrating the women's rites and for singing auspicious songs."—*Umāra Vivāha* by Ānandamayī, *vide Typical Selections, etc.*, Part II, p. 1872.

"There was a sound of conch-shells, bells, and lutes, and the women were singing sweet songs."—*Rāmāyaṇa*, by Dvija Bhavāṇī, *vide Typical Selections, etc.*, Part I, p. 583.

[26] (*a*) Jayanārāyaṇa Sena's *Harilīlā*.
(*b*) Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, p. 79 (B.E.).

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star settled on the fortunes of that family. A bad wife was looked upon as a cause of unhappiness to her husband.[27] An ideal (' *uttamā* ') wife was one who was always solicitous for her husband's welfare, though the latter might commit something wrong ; next to her ('*madhyamā*') in merit was she who returned good for good and evil for evil to her husband ; but one who returned evil for good done by her husband was a bad wife ('*adhamā*'). A wife who became angry with her husband without rhyme or reason was nicknamed a ' *Caṇḍī Nāyikā*' (*Lady Fury*).[28]

Position of a woman in a Hindu joint family.

The position of a wife in a Hindu joint family was interrelated with the interests and the comforts of its other members as well. She had her duties not only to her husband but also to each and every member of her family ; and a husband, who regarded his wife as an object of personal enjoyment and comfort only, was looked upon as violating the sacred ties of a joint family. In this connection we can very well compare the instructions that Vidyā, the heroine of Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*, received from her mother, when the former was going for the first time to her father-in-law's house : " My darling ! as it is a

[27] " He, whose wife is wicked, is dead even in his lifetime ; he should retire to the forest."—Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, p. 25 (B.E.).

[28] *Ibid*, p. 169 (B.E.).

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custom, so I speak a few words unto you. Try to be like unto the superiors of your family, and serve them to their satisfaction. She, who has kindness for her fellow-beings, becomes the mistress of the house.'' [29] It would not be proper to suppose that the girls, after their marriage at a comparatively early age, were thrust amidst the severe duties of a practical life without any previous training or equipment. The innocent amusements and diversions of their early days, in the course of which they very often created a mimic world of their own, served to sow in their hearts the seeds of the higher duties of a household life. We find a very real picture of this 'play-way' in the writings of a contemporary poet:—"Princess Umā was in the company of her playmates of equal age, Jaśodā, Rohiṇī, Citralekhā and others. Being pleased at heart, she had taken her seat in the midst of all and had made a temple of clay under the 'Bakula' tree. Along with Jayā and Haimavatī, who had prepared ovens with red earthen pots and red fuel, she was busy cooking nicely. After preparing rice of dust, Gaurī served it to all. They did not really eat anything and only touched their mouths with their hands. They finished washing their mouths without real water, and asked for betel. She prepared beds of Kadamba leaves, and they went to bed

[29] Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*, p. 49 (B.E.).

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amidst great merriment, a pair of friends lying down in each bed.....Some of them swept the ground and besmeared it with water and cowdung, as if it were the family of a householder." The last phrase of this passage is significant, and the accuracy of the description shows that this picture was really drawn from the family life of contemporary society.[30]

Certain customs.

When a woman became pregnant, a special ceremony was arranged for her on an auspicious day. She was dressed in new clothes and was presented with offerings of felicitation (*sādh-bheṭ*) amidst the rejoicings of the members of her family.[31] The

[30] *Dharmamaṅgala*, by Sahadeva Cakravartī, *Typical Selections, etc.*, Part I, p. 482.

There is no doubt that this was a traditional feature of Hindu family life, and we find a poet of the 10th century A.D. writing in the same vein:—

Wife—"I will go to your country, my lord, but ill will it fare with me, when I am in need of apparel."

Husband—"In my fair city, a colony of weavers will I found for you."

Wife—"I will go with you, my lord, but who will be my brothers and sisters there."

Husband—"My brother and sisters will, my darling, be brothers and sisters unto you."—*Typical Selections, etc.*, Part I, p. 171.

[31] "Give her *sādh-bheṭ*,—she has become pregnant."—Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*, p. 21 (B.E.); Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 11.

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women were very fond of betels and arecanut.[32] Women in the villages used to take their bath in ponds, and were fond of going there in a company, with water pitchers in their arms.[33] They were expert in the art of cooking and did not depend on servants or cooks for preparing meals for the members of their family.[34] While entering the kitchen, they, first of all, worshipped or invoked the goddess Annapurṇā, and did not eat a particle of the food prepared by them before feeding all the members of their family or their guests. After dinner female members of two or three neighbouring families assembled together and spent some time in frank and gentle gossips, and in reading religious books or books of stories and fables. Some of them engaged themselves in spinning yarn and twist by means of "*tākus*" or "*carkās*," which they afterwards sold to the weavers. "Their income varied with the quality and

Women engaged in spinning and weaving.

[32] (*a*) "With the mouth full of betel and arecanut, and with a necklace round the neck."—Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*

(*b*) "Flies flit before her mouth devoid of the fragrance of betels."—Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, p. 54 (B.E.).

[33] "At that moment the women of the village came to take their bath in a company."—Bhāratacandra. *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67 (B.E.) ; Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, p. 223.

[34] (*a*) Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-33.

(*b*) Gaṅgānārāyaṇa's *Bhavāṇimaṅgala*: "Some were engaged in cooking, some in boiling the milk, etc."

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quantity of thread they could produce, and they were accordingly praised in the circle of women. This helped many of the indigent families in defraying their expenses. Though the higher middle classes regarded this (home industry) as humiliating to their rank, yet their womenfolk spun a considerable amount of twist and yarn under the pretence of preparing their own clothes or sacred threads, and could amass a small sum of money by selling it through the agency of other women of lower social rank."[35] Thus, it was in the cottages of the poor, the needy and the infirm, that this spinning industry was more in vogue than in the comparatively thriving homesteads of the higher middle classes or the establishments of the rich.[36]

Obnoxious customs among women.—

There were certain obnoxious customs prevalent among the women of the age. They believed in the efficacy (harmful or beneficial) of incantations and charms, and those who were disappointed in their love, or were in disfavour with their husbands, tried to exercise or establish their influence by means of these. We find in Bhāratacandra's

[35] *Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita*, p. 37.

[36] "That *** sleep influenced the eyes of the old woman Jayā, who was spinning thread in the late hours of the night."—*Dharmamaṅgala*, by Narasiṁha Vasu, *vide Typical Selections, etc.*, Part I, p. 473.

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"Mānasiṁha" that when Bhavānanda Majumdāra had returned home, his elder wife Candrāmukhī proceeded to safeguard her exclusive influence on her husband by wearing a charmed dress. Under the advice of her maid-servant Sādhī she had rubbed incanted oil on her face, had worn incanted flowers in her hair, and had painted vermilion on her forehead after uttering several magical charms.[37] It was women of the type of Sādhī and Mādhī, the two maid-servants of Bhavānanda Majumdāra's first and second wives respectively, who were adept in these practices and who exercised an infectious and pernicious influence on others also. Another evil, to which the women were subject, was their habit of telling or asking something readily on an oath, or of facile swearing. We find in Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara* that when Vidyā was very eager for Sundara, and was requesting her companions to bring back Hīrā Mālinī, whom she had just before insulted, her companions replied, "Why are you so anxious? Ask her on oath, and you will come to know everything."[38]

[37] Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, p. 128 (B. E). *Cf.* "In connection with medicinal charms, Mukunda says that a powerful medicine does not overpower the old."—*Kavikaṅkaṇa Caṇḍi.*

[38] Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*, p. 12 (B.E.).

We should note that men also were not free from this habit. "If the letter does not arrive here on the 3rd

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Their quarrelsome habit.

Another taint in the nature of the village women was their quarrelsome habit. They were prone to fall out with one another over any trifling matter, whenever they gathered together. This has been well hinted at by Bhāratacandra in his *Annadāmaṅgala* in the chapter on '*Kondala o Śivanindā.*'[39] Especially on the occasion of ceremonies like marriage, 'new-rice day,' and others, they became very fastidious and gave themselves up to capricious criticisms, or quarrelling about trifling things. But in general the Hindu women were "gentle in their manners and have something soft and musical in their voices."[40]

Satī.

The practice of '*Satī*' (that is, a wife burning herself on the funeral pyre of her husband) was greatly prevalent during this period,[41] and it has been referred to by many contemporary European writers. Mr. Bolts says: "Even those very women, who live

then I am undone ;...please, upon my oath, send Majumdāra's letter."—S. R. Mitra, *Types of Early Bengali Prose*, pp. 115-117 ; *Nandakumāra Carita*, pp. 32-38.

[39] Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20 (B.E.).

[40] Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 50.

[41] (*a*) "Rati was about to burn herself as a '*Satī*' in the burning fire, when she heard a voice from heaven."—Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, p. 17 (B.E.).

(*b*) "I shall presently die with you by burning the pyre and entering into it."—Rāmaprasāda, *op. cit.*, p. 65 (B.E.).

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sequestered from the world, and of course are inexperienced in such difficulties and misfortunes as served to fortify the mind and heart, or such distress as will render life irksome or impel to desperation, often manifest such fortitude as amazes Europeans but to hear of, in the horrid deaths which they voluntarily brave, of burning alive with the dead bodies of their husbands in funeral pyres."[42] Craufurd[43] has given a thrilling description of the manner in which the women burnt themselves :—"A funeral pile being erected on a piece of ground that was consecrated to the purpose, the body of the Raja was brought from the fort, accompanied by many Brahmins and others and followed by the widow attended by relations of both sexes. Being arrived at the funeral pile, the body was placed on it, and certain ceremonies being performed, the widow took leave of her relations. But she was perfectly composed, smiled and endeavoured to comfort them. She then advanced to the pile, and in a solemn manner walked round it. She stopped ; and after contemplating the corpse, touched the feet with her hand and raised it to her forehead, inclining her body

Remarks of contemporary European writers about it.

[42] Bolts' *Considerations*, p. 7.

[43] *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 17-18. We find an almost similar description in Stavorinus, *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, pp. 441-50.

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forwards. She then saluted the spectators in the same manner ; and with the assistance of the Brahmans mounted the pile, and seated herself by the side of the corpse. . Some who stood near her with torches in their hands set fire to it, and as it was composed of dry wood, straw and other combustible materials, it was instantly in a flame." The Brahmins and the priests took an important part in such '*Satī*' sacrifices.[44] "Such a devoted woman," when about to offer herself as a *Satī*, was not allowed to be touched and thus defiled by a non-Hindu ; the Dutch Director Sichterman (1744) "was obliged to pay twenty-five thousand rupees, for an imprudence of this kind, which he had been guilty of."[44a] The courage and fortitude with which the widows, unperturbed in the least by considerations of worldly enjoyments, offered themselves up in such ghastly sacrifices, were extraordinary.[45] These sacrifices, so shocking to humanity, however, demonstrated the strength of conjugal fidelity.[46] Scrafton remarks : "Another

[44] Ives' *Voyage*, p. 23

[44a] Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 448-49.

[45] "Such is the influence of customs and the sense of shame that a woman of the highest birth will undergo this awful sacrifice with as much fortitude and composure as ever were exhibited by any hero or philosopher of antiquity."—Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 15-16 ; Bolts' *Considerations*, p. 7.

[46] "A woman desires to get her husband's body. It is

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circumstance that contributes to form their general character, is their marrying when infants ; and yet no women are more remarkable for the custom of burning with their husbands. Many authors ascribe this to have been instituted to prevent their wives poisoning them ; but I am well persuaded they often submit to it by a nice sense of honour and conjugal affection.'' [47] The Dutch traveller Stavorinus, who witnessed a *Satī* case at Chinsurah on 25th November, 1770, writes that the woman " underwent everything with the greatest intrepidity and her countenance seemed at times, to be animated with pleasure, even at the moment when she was ascending the fatal pile.'' [47a] He paid particular " attention to her in order to discover whether any convulsive motions agitated her feet, but they remained immovable in the midst of conflagration. Compulsion might have been sometimes used, but that was, remarks the same writer, " seldom necessary as they possess sufficient enthusiasm willingly to devote themselves to this horrible death.'' He also refers to the case of the wife of a rich Bengali broker of the Dutch East India Company gladly offering herself as a *Satī*, though her husband had been a veritable debauchee and

proved by the fact that she burns herself with her dead husband.''—Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, pp. 22 (B.E.).

[47] *Reflections on the Government of Indostan*, pp. 110-11.

[47a] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 448.

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had left her company ; she refused to obey the instructions of her friends and relatives who tried to dissuade her from the act on the ground that her husband " had used her so ill in his lifetime." [47b] Thus it would be wrong to suppose that in all cases women sacrificed themselves under the pressure of social conventions and the expostulations of the priests and their relatives. " At five o'clock in the morning of the 4th February, 1742-43, died Rhaam Chand Pandit, of the Moharatta tribe, aged twenty-eight years. His widow (for he had but one wife), aged between seventeen and eighteen, as soon as he expired, disdaining to wait the term allowed her for reflection, immediately intimated to the Brahmins and witnesses present her resolution to burn. As the family was of no small consideration, all the merchants of Cossimbazar and her relations,[48] left no arguments unessayed to dissuade her from it. But she listened to none, and her friends finding her thus peremptory and resolved, were obliged at last to assent." [49] She had to wait till the Faujdar's permission for her burning had been received. Here it is interesting to note that the state had already

[47b] The pile of sandalwood that had been erected for this body was calculated to be worth £633 sterling.

[48] Thus some of the Maratha families had by this time settled in Bengal.

[49] Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 19.

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adopted some measures to prevent forcible and involuntary cases of such sacrifices.[50]

There were, however, particular circumstances in which the practice of *Satī* was forbidden. The burning of a pregnant woman was not allowed by the Śāstras,[51] and when the husband died at a distance from his wife she could not burn herself, unless she could procure her husband's girdle and turban to be placed on the funeral pile.[52] Serafton remarks that "the practice (of *Satī*) was far from common, and was only complied with by those of illustrious families."[53] Stavorinus notes that it was prevalent among "some castes."[53a] Sometimes, temples were erected on the spot where one of those sacrifices had been performed. Craufurd says that he had seen one of those places, "where the spot on which the funeral pile had been erected was enclosed and covered with bamboos, formed into a kind of bower planted with flowering creepers. The inside was set round with flowers, and

[50] "The order of leave for her burning did not arrive from Hasseyn Khan, Fouzdaar of Murshidabad, until after one, and it was then brought by one of the Soubah's own officers who had orders to see that she burnt voluntarily."—*Ibid*, p. 21.

[51] "Nahe Śāstra sammatā sasatvā sahamṛtā."—Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*, p. 33 (B.E.).

[52] Craufurd, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

[53] *Reflections on the Government of Indostan*, p. 11.

[53a] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 441.

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at one end there was an image.''[54] The practice of burying the wife with the dead body of her husband was prevalent among some.[55]

Attempts for two social reforms,—abolition of *ekādaśībrata* and introduction of widow-remarriage.

It would be interesting to note that attempts were made at that time to reform two social customs concerning widows. One was an attempt made by Rāṇī Bhavāṇī who was much pained at her daughter's widowhood, to remove the rigours of the '*Ekādaśībrata*' (fasting of widows on the eleventh day of the moon) ;[56] but it failed owing to the opposition of the *paṇdits*. About the other attempt, the author of the *Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita* has noted on the strength of tradition that Rājā Rajballabh of Vikrampur (Dacca), whose daughter had become a widow at an early age, tried in 1756 to introduce widow-remarriage.[57] His proposal received the sanction of many *paṇdits* ; but it failed ultimately as Rājā Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā turned the opinion of the *paṇdits* of his court against it.

[54] *Op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

[55] *Ibid*, p. 37 ; Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 441 and 451.

[56] '*Sāhitya*', Fālgun, 1304 B.S.

[57] *Calcutta Review*, 1855. The Bengal Spectator, July 1842, p. 51.

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Section III

Marriage Laws and Customs.

It was the duty of the parents to marry their sons or daughters according to the established laws and customs of the society. They celebrated the '*karṇabedha*' ceremony [1] of their boys, when the latter were 5 or 6 years of age.[2] The boys then had their ears pierced with a needle and thread and the family preceptor performed many other accompanying rites. The match-makers [3] played an important part in settling the marriage terms. They were engaged by the parents to find out suitable bridegrooms or brides for their children, and received rewards on discharging their duties.[4] Sometimes, the royal or

Karṇabedha ceremony.

Match-makers and Bhāṭa.

[1] "If a Hindu acquires merit by *karṇabedha*."—Bhāratacandra, p. 117 (B. E.).

[2] "The *karṇabedha* (ceremony) was celebrated in the fifth year."—Rāmaprasāda, p. 50 (B. E.).

[3] "Go to Himālaya as a match-maker and settle the marriage between Umā and Śaṅkara."—*Ibid*, p. 16 and Bhāratacandra, p. 14 (B. E.).

[4] (*a*) "The Ṭhākura got riches after the match-maker had received his share."—Bhāratacandra, p. 57 (B. E.).

(*b*) "Hīrā said that the match-maker was to be rewarded afterwards."—Rāmaprasāda, p. 13 (B. E.).

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rich families sent '*Bhāṭs*' [5] for such purposes and these '*Bhāṭs*' used to sing verses alluding to the heroic and noble deeds performed by the members of the families by which they had been engaged,[6] at the courts of other princes and nobles, and being themselves very clever fellows, they performed the task, commissioned to them, most satisfactorily. These intermediaries having practically settled the terms of marriage, the parents or other guardians of the would-be couple met together, and after a due exchange of courtesies, settled the terms by a formal deed of contract (*lagnapatra*),[7] which was kept with the father of the bridegroom who took it with him at the time of the marriage.

Settlement of terms and *lagnapatra*.

[5] (*a*) *Cf.* the chapter on 'Vidyāra pātra anveṣaṇe Mādhava Bhāṭera Kāñchīpura gamana' in Rāmaprasāda, p. 3 (B. E.).

(*b*) 'The Bhāṭ went with your words of promise.'—Bhāratacandra, p. 77 (B. E.).

[6] Note 5. About these 'Bhāṭs,' *vide* '*Introduction to the Descriptive Catalogue of Bengali Manuscripts in the C. U. Library*,' Vol. I, XIX-XX, and the address delivered by late Sir Asutosh Mookerjee at the Annual meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1913, and Malcolm, *Memoir of Central India*, Vol. II, pp. 131-39.

[7] (*a*) "Nārada went away after preparing the *lagnapatra*."—Bhāratacandra, p. 14 (B. E.).

(*b*) "Although the match be previously agreed on by the parents, the father of the boy goes with much

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The marriage was celebrated at the house of the bride. On the day preceding the marriage ceremony (*i. e.*, on the '*adhivāsa*' day), the mistress of the house invited the women of the locality, who came properly dressed and adorned and celebrated the necessary customary rites. [8] First of all, they, as it were, sanctified the ceremony by singing auspicious songs out of ecstasy and then proceeded to arrange for the bride's bath. The old piece of *sāḍī* on the person of the bride was exchanged for a new one (*khāra parityāga*) and paste or juice of turmeric, mixed with scented oil, was rubbed on her body, while her companions poured water on

Adhivāsa and women's rites.

formality, and demands the girl for his son. The answer is returned with equal ceremony, and many preliminary forms being observed, the day of the marriage is fixed."—Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 6-10.

[8] (*a*) "Vidhimate je āchilā strīācāra |
Kharaparityāga save karena sītara ||
Snāna karāila Sītāke anandita mana |
Maṅgala ācāra save kare nārīgaṇa ||
Snāna kari parāila uttama vasana |
Adhivāsa kaila save nārīgaṇa ||"

Rāmāyaṇa by Adbhutācārya, 1742 A.D., *Typical Selections*, etc., Part I, pp. 561-63.

(*b*) "Māiyā sava jāiā āisā nimantraṇa kara |
Strīācāra rita nānāgīta maṅgalera ||
* * *
Chuṇi maṇi bahumūlya jaḍita ratana |
Bidyutera prāya sava girira bhavana ||
Gāhiche maṅgala save ati haraṣita ||
Umāra snānera ceṣṭā rāṇīra tvarita ||

it from their pitchers. As soon as the bath was over, her body was carefully rubbed and adorned with a new gold-thread and embroidered *sāḍī* and beautiful ornaments. Thus was the '*Adhivāsa*' celebrated.

Sanctity of nuptial tie.

The idea that the nuptial tie was as holy as any other religious bond was present among the upper classes of the Hindu society. So the parents of both the bridegroom and the bride regarded it as their first and foremost duty to propitiate the Gods and their departed forefathers by offering worship and by performing *Śrāddha* ceremonies on the marriage day.[9] On the

Sutaila haridra-rasā ekatra kariā ।
Ratna simhāsana par Umāre vasāiā ॥
Mājiche komala deha haridrāra rase ।
Aṅgete dhāliche bāri sakhi sava hose ॥
Snāna karāiā aṅga mochāi jatane ।
Parāila jari sāḍī racita ratane ॥ ''

Umāra Vivāha, by Ānandamayī, *T. Selections*, Part II, pp. 1872-74.

[9] "The king Janaka sat to perform the *Śrāddha* ceremony and (the preceptor) made him perform it according to proper rules. After this he gave away the bride and propitiated the Brahmins by offering various gifts. In the meanwhile the king Daśaratha also performed the '*Nāndīmukha*' and *Śrāddha* ceremonies according to due rites and thus satisfied his (dead) parents."—*Rāmāyaṇa*, by Adbhutācārya, *T. Selections*, Part I, p. 561.

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appointed day the bridegroom's party (*varajātra*), which was usually composed of the bridegroom's father, the family preceptor, the family barber and other friends and relatives,[10] proceeded to the house of the bride amidst the sound of musical drums and other instruments. The bridegroom was dressed with a '*mukuṭa*' on his head, with fine and costly apparel on his person, with garlands of flowers round his neck and with sandal-paste, musk, etc., rubbed on his face.[11] On the marriage day, the bridegroom had

Marriage party.

Bridegroom's dress.

[10] "Owing to the marriage of Śiva all, with great cheerfulness, became very careful. Musical drums were being sounded and Indra, with great pleasure, went in front of all ; the Gods went with friends and relatives as *varajātras*; Brahmā went as the preceptor and Nārāyaṇa as the bridegroom's guardian."—Bhāratacandra, p. 18 (B.E.). We may compare somewhat similar passages used with reference to the same occasion and place :—

(*a*) "Kanyākartā haila kanyā varakartā vara ।
Purohita bhaṭṭācārya haila pañcaśara ॥
Kanyājātra varajātra ṛtu cārajana ।
Vādyakare Vādyakara kiṅkiṇī kaṅkaṇa ॥"

Bhāratacandra, p. 79 (B.E.).

(*b*) "The hearts of the bridegroom and the bride became, as it were, their guardians. The cupid himself became the preceptor, the gentle breeze the *varajātras* and the bees served the purpose of the musical instruments."—Rāmaprasāda, p. 17 (B.E.).

[11] Bhāratacandra, p. 18 (B.E.).

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to remain without food till the ceremony was over.[12] The bride's father kept everything ready in his house in expectation of the bridegroom's arrival. Besides the usual rooms for receiving the visitors, a large area was covered and formed into a pandal, lined with white linen or chintz and decorated with garlands of flowers.[13] The bridegroom was seated at one end of the pandal, with his face to the north and the bride on his left side. The bride's father sat with his face to the east[14] and with the articles of presents (for the bridegroom) on his left side.[15] The relatives and guests sat round the pandal on the floor, which was covered with new mats or carpets.[16] Then followed some of those women's rites, which were meant to welcome the bridegroom. The mother of the bride, with other women whose husbands were living, came out near the pandal with a lamp, grass (*dūrbā*), betels, etc., on a

Celebration of the ceremony.

Women's rites.

12 "You will have to abstain completely from food till the (marriage) ceremony is over."—*Ibid.*

13 Craufurd, Vol. II, pp. 6-10.

14 "Uttarāsye rākhiāche varera āsana."—Bhāratacandra, p. 19 (B.E.).

15 "In the assembly, Himālaya sat with his face to the east and with the articles of presents for the bridegroom on his left side."—*Ibid.*

16 Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 6-10.

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plate (*nichānidālā*)[17] and making '*ulu-dhvani*' all the while. Then, one by one, the ladies celebrated the welcome ceremony.[18] Some of them blew the conch-shells, some warbled the welcoming '*ulu-dhvani*,'[19] some lighted the lamps, while some tore into pieces the betel-leaves. This was also attended with various jokes, *viz.*, some of the ladies threw handfuls of rice and raw sugar (*guḍa*) at the bridegroom, and others walked round him spraying him with water from jars (*jhāri*, a water vessel with a spout) in their hands and so on.[20] After this the bridegroom and the

[17] (*a*) "Along with the women, whose husbands were living, and taking a lamp in her hand, she proceeded with the '*nichānīdālā*,' making cheering sounds (*ulu-dhvani*) all the while."—Bhāratacandra, p. 19 (B.E.).

(*b*) "Nichāni karite genu laye taila kuṇḍa."—*Ibid*, p. 20 (B.E.).

[18] 'Varaṇa,' the process that a bridegroom had to go through when he was welcomed by the ladies of the household.

[19] So long as the ceremony was not over, the ladies produced such cheering voices (*ulu-dhvani*) at quick intervals:

(*a*) "Kutuhale ulu-dhvani deya eyogaṇa."—Bhāratacandra, p. 21 (B.E.).

(*b*) "Ulu diche ghana ghana pika simantinī."—Rāmaprasāda, p. 17 (B.E.).

[20] "With cheerful hearts the ladies welcomed the bridegroom. Some blew the conch-shell, some made cheering sounds (*ulu-dvani*), some lighted the lamp, while some tore the betel leaves into pieces. Some of

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bride were taken under the pandal and the priest began to utter the sacred mantras.[21] This being over the bride was taken round the bridegroom for seven times [22] and she placed a garland round her husband's neck.[23] The priest then made the bridegroom and the bride look upon each other with an auspicious vision (*śubhadṛṣṭi*).[24] After

them threw handfuls of rice and raw sugar (*guḍa*) on the body of the bridegroom, some went round him in graceful steps with water-pots in their hands, while others rubbed a reed on his nose and placed a shuttle in his hands. Then Menakā said, 'Will you be so good as to weave ?'—*Kālikāmaṅgala*, by Dvija Kālidāsa, *Typical Selections, etc.*, Part I, p. 144.

The last sentence is really significant. Its Bengali equivalent is:—"Nākhete chñecāi nala hāte deya māku ! Menakā Śivere kan bhñyā kara vāpu||" 'Bhñyā' may be corruption of *vayan* (vyān=weaving). The rite must have been a symbolic one, indicating or testing ability of the bridegroom to weave, to earn a living and to clothe his wife. It shows the truth of Pelsaert's remark that all through Bengal and Orissa, from Sonargaon to Puri, every villager was a skilled weaver.

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] "The bride goes round the bridegroom for seven times."—Rāmaprasāda, p. 18 (B. E.).

[23] "She placed a garland round the neck of her husband."—*Ibid.*

[24] "Vaśiṣṭha got up and made them look upon each other with an auspicious vision."—*Umāra Vivāha*, by Ānandamayī, *Typical Selections*, Part II, pp. 1872-74. This custom was celebrated with the holy idea that if

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this the bridegroom rubbed vermilion powder on the forehead of the bride.[25]

Worship of gods.

Almost every ceremony of the Hindus was attended with a religious worship,[26] and in the midst of festivities and enjoyments of the marriage ceremonies they did not forget to worship their gods, who were then invoked by the priests with sacred *mantras*, offerings and oblations. A spot for performing the sacrifice was selected in the centre of the pandal "with flowers all round on the floor in various designs and figures." The altar was lighted [27] and the priest occasionally put into the

the couple looked upon each other with a favourable vision on this solemn occasion, then they would enjoy a very pure and happy conjugal life and one would not be displeased with the other.

[25] "Sundara rubbed vermilion powder on the forehead of his beautiful wife." Rāmaprasāda, p. 18 (B. E.). For a true significance of this use of vermilion powder by the women, *vide* the section on "Dress and ornaments."

[26] "Their customs are a part of their religion being sanctioned by the supposed divine character of their legislator who, they believe, was a being of so exalted a nature as to be inferior only to God himself; of infinite knowledge and all his words were truth."—Parker, '*The War in India*,' p 2, and Scrafton, '*Reflections on the Government of Indostan*.'

[27] "Lāja homa pare dhuma nayane paśila."—*Umāra Vivāha* by Ānandamayī, *T. Selections*, Part II, pp. 1872-74.

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fire bits of sandal wood, benzoin and other articles. Being directed by the priest, the bridegroom got up from his seat at certain intervals and walked round the place of sacrifice, along with the bride. The father of the bride also got up and, according to the instructions of the priest, took his daughter by one of her hands and joined it with one hand of the bridegroom.[28] After that he invoked the Gods to witness that he gave his daughter to be the wife of such a person (*i. e.*, his son-in-law).[29] A plate of sun-dried rice (*ātapa cāla*) was then brought there, and one by one, the Brahmins and other superiors of the married couple, present on that occasion, threw something of it on their heads.[30] The bridegroom and the bride were then taken into a room, which had been specially selected and decorated for that purpose[31] (*i. e.*, the *vāsaraghara*), where the companions of the bride and other ladies, who were in such a relation with the bride as could permit them to cut jokes with her husband, amused the married couple by

[28] "After marriage the hands of the couple were joined together."—*Ibid.*

[29] Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 6-10.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] (*a*) "With hearts full of pleasure the bridegroom and the bride went into the *vāsaraghara*."—*Kālikāmaṅgala*, by Dvija Kālidāsa, *Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 144.

(*b*) "Sindurera koṭā dila rajata thuite. ।

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light conversations and jest ; thus the whole night was spent in happiness and mirth. From contemporary literature we can have a real picture of this, and we cannot but admire the beauty and skill with which such rooms were decorated.[32] Craufurd was very particular in observing one important custom, to which he refers in the following terms :—The bridegroom "leading her (bride) up to one of those stones that are used for grinding spices and other ingredients for some of their victuals he places her hand on it, thereby implying the obligation she has contracted of taking care of his household concerns." [33]

Processions, fireworks, etc.

Great processions, along with the display of fireworks [34] and the sound of *dundubhi* (musical drums) and other instruments [35] and various illuminations,

Hāte kari Umā neya vāsaragṛhete ‖ "

Umāra Vivāha, by Ānandamayī, *Typical Selections*, Part II, pp. 1872-74.

32 (*a*) Rāmaprasāda, p. 15 (B.E.).

(*b*) *Rāmāyaṇa*, by Adbhutācārya, *Typical Selections*, Part I, pp. 567-68.

33 Craufurd, *op. cit*, Vol. II, pp. 6-10.

34 (*a*) "Strengthened by wind, the fire itself acted as fire-works."—Bhāratacandra, p. 18 (B.E.).

(*b*) "The breath itself acted as fire-works." Bhāratacandra, p. 79 (B.E.).

35 "Drums and various other musical instruments were being sounded at quick intervals."—*Rāmāyaṇa*, by

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accompanied the bridegroom on the occasion of his home-coming. The married couple sat together in one palanquin and their relatives and friends joined the procession on horseback or on elephants; many went on foot also.[36] The rejoicings lasted for several days and the guests were entertained with music and dance.[37]

Bridegroom's home-coming.

Generally, on the day following the marriage ceremony the bridegroom's party left the bride's house and proceeded homewards with the bridegroom and the bride.[38] The bride's parents and relatives bade farewell to their young daughter with tears in

Instructions to the bride by her parents.

Dvija Bhavānī, 1740 A.D., *Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 583.

[36] Same as note 33.

[37] Contemporary European writers like Edward Ives, Stavorinus and Craufurd refer to dancing girls, possessed of peculiar tastes and tricks. It is quite probable that those dancing girls were engaged on such occasions. "They will spend almost the whole night in seeing dancing and hearing music; yet none dance but the women whose profession it is and who devote themselves to the pleasure and amusement of the public."—Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 39. Stavorinus (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 438) gives us an idea about their dress which was generally rich and gorgeous. Compare the description of Mahārājā Kṛṣṇacandra's marriage as given in Rājibalocana's *Kṛṣṇacandracarita*, p. 38.

[38] "The Gods, the demigods, and other members

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their eyes [39] and tried to console her by various instructions.[40] These instructions imparted to the bride by her parents and relatives were meant to guide her in the house of her husband, where she henceforth occupied an important place as a member of a joint family. The parents of the bride, who were rather rich, sent along with their daughter [41] *melānībhāras* (consisting of various food articles such as sweetmeats, curd, etc., which were regarded as auspicious) and various other presents in dresses, elephants, horses, etc.[42] They sent with her one or two maid-servants and a few other companions.[43]

of the bridegroom's party departed on the next day." Śivāyana by Rāmeśvara, 1750 A.D., p. 31, B.E.

39 Rāmaprasāda, pp. 47-48, B.E.

40 " Kintu vyāvahara āche.....". *Vide* the section on " *Position of Women.*"

41 (*a*) " Menakā has given something in *melānībhāra.*"—Bhāratacandra, p. 22.

(*b*) " With tears in his eyes, Giri agreed to the proposal and got many ' *melānībhāras* ' ready."—*Kālikāmangala* by Dvija Kālidāsa, *Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 145.

42 (*a*) " The king, who resembled Karṇa in his charity, presented many precious articles such as an umbrella, an elephant, a chariot, servants and maid-servants."—Rāmaprasāda, p. 49, B.E.

(*b*) " They presented many articles, which it will be a long story to describe; servants, maid-servants and many soldiers were also sent."—Bhāratacandra, p. 108.

43 " They, who would accompany her, had smiling

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The newly-married couple welcomed in an auspicious manner.

When the marriage party returned to the bridegroom's house, the parents and relatives of the bridegroom welcomed the newly-married couple in a solemn and auspicious manner. The path leading to their house was cleared and beautifully decorated with plantain trees on both sides of it, and a water-pot filled with water and adorned with boughs of a mango-tree was placed at the entrance of the house.[44] Due attention being paid to all the auspicious family customs, the mother of the bridegroom joined with other ladies, took her new daughter-in-law inside the house. The women of the locality then visited her house to see the bride, who made obeisance to each of the superiors and received blessings in return. Some of them cut jokes with the bride, while others being of a fastidious and scrutinising nature, passed various critical remarks upon her.[45]

Feasts and entertainments.

The entertainments lasted for a few days, in one of which the '*boubhāta*' (a special feast arranged in the bridegroom's house, in which the bride had to serve a little quantity of rice to each of the invited guests

faces, while the pangs of separation of those, who would not accompany her, knew no bounds.''—Rāmaprasāda, p. 48.

44 *Ibid*, pp. 49-50, B.E.

45 *Ibid*.

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before they touched their dishes) ceremony was celebrated.[46]

A newly-married girl was not expected to remain long in her father-in-law's house and her parents became subject to a rebuke gratis of the women of their village, if they failed to bring back their daughter within a short time.[47] To remain long in his father-in-law's house was thought improper for a bridegroom.[48] Indeed, the situation of those who married the daughters of rich men on condition that they would remain for ever in their father-in-law's house (as *gharajāmātās*), was quite different. In such cases the bridegrooms

Gharajāmātās.

[46] "I lost my stick, used for preparing *bhāng*, on the very day of the *boubhāta* ceremony."—*Śivāyana* by Kavijīvana Mitra, 1744 A.D. Kavijīvana Mitra was born in the village of Lāhiḍīpāḍā, six miles to the north of Bogurā, *vide Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 129.

[47] *Cf.* the portion '*Umā-virahe Menakā*' in Dvija Kālidāsa's *Kālikāmaṅgala*, *Typical Selections*,' Part I, pp. 148-49.

[48] (*a*) "Oh my Lord! give up your desire for staying in your father-in-law's house and let us soon go to your own house."—*Bhavānimaṅgala* by Gaṅgānārāyṇa. As the poet puts it, Bhāvāṇī made this request to Śiva, because of his staying in his father-in-law's house for one year after the marriage.

(*b*) Hari said to Pañcānana: "As it is your father-in-law's house, it is not proper to stay here for many days."—Rāmeśvara's *Śivāyana*, p. 31. B.E.

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left with certain formalities the families of their parents and entered into those of their fathers-in-law.[49] They had, however, to lead very miserable and wretched lives and had to bear patiently the frownings and ill-treatment of their brothers-in-law and others.[50]

Early marriages were general.

Marriages of boys and girls were celebrated in their early ages.[50a] Generally, the marriage of a girl in an advanced age was not permitted by the laws of the society and the parents of such a girl incurred a universal odium ;[51] they

49 Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 5-6.

50 "He only, who has once suffered, and none else, will realise what sort of honour a *gharajāmātā* receives in his father-in-law's house. At first he his respected but gradually he is slighted by all in various ways ; especially the words of his brother-in-law become hotter and more furious than fire itself."—*Sivāyana* by Rāmeśvara, p. 32, B.E.

50a Stavorinus, *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 441.

51 (*a*) "Alas! what should I say! such a grown up but unmarried girl is like burning fire. You should arrange for her marriage and thus preserve the sanctity of the laws of religion.—Bhāratacandra, p. 90, B.E.

(*b*) "Finding such a girl unmarried, others will, out of shame, cut their tongue with their own teeth."—Rāmaprasāda, p. 23, B.E.

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apprehended an eternal damnation for thus violating the sacred laws of religion, which enjoined the marriage of a girl before the age of puberty. This was so noticeable a feature of the Hindu social life of that time, that it did not fail to attract the notice of European writers, one of whom, writing a few years later, observed : "The Hindus are so scrupulous with respect to the virginity of their brides, that they marry extremely young, although consummation is deferred till they marry a person with whom those symptoms have already appeared to which the sex is subject."[52] When the girls were under menstruation for the first time after their marriage, the ceremony of *punarviā* (second marriage) was celebrated with various rites and customs, a few of them being similar to those of the first marriage.[53] Mr. Scrafton observes : "They are married in their infancy, and consummate at 14 on the male side, and 10 or 11 on the female, and it is common to see a woman of 12 with a child in

Girls under menstruation and the ceremony of *punarviā*.

[52] Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 2.

[53] (*a*) "Vidyāra haila ṛtu sakhīrā jānila ।
Viā mata punarviā sundara karila ॥
Khudmāgā kādā khṅeḍu nārinu racite ।
Pṅuthi beḍe jāi baḍa kheda raila cite ॥"

Bhāratacandra, p. 88, B.E.

(*b*) "Kādākhṅeḍu had been over and only *punarviā* (second marriage) was left to be celebrated." Bhāratacandra, p. 118, B.E.

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her arms. Though barren women are rare among them, yet they bear but few children, for at 18 their beauty is on the decline, and at 25 they are strongly marked with age."[54] Mr. Scrafton's statements can be supported by the evidence of contemporary literature also.[55] The girls had no hand in the choice of their husbands and their opinions were not at all thought necessary. Sometimes, an accomplished and well-read girl was married to a husband who was deaf and of black complexion,[56] a girl of fair beauty was married to a blind man[57] prone to quarrelling and creating uneasiness, a young girl was married to an old man,[58] a girl of tender and slim body was matched

[54] *Reflections on the Government of Indostan*, pp. 10-11.

[55] "Gradually he attained his 13th year and his parents were overpowered with joy. They married him to a daughter of a king, belonging to the same class; and she was a blessed girl, possessed of beauty and qualities." —Rāmaprasāda, p. 51, B.E.

[56] One woman said, "My friend ! let me tell you about my misfortune. I have been married to a husband who is deaf and of black complexion. All my fine and aesthetic knowledge of poetry, learnt with much hope, has been spoiled by being wedded to this deaf. fellow."— Bhāratacandra, p. 97, B.E.

[57] "My unfortunate and blind husband is expert only in quarrelling; I have lost my fair complexion and has turned black by always thinking over my fate."—*Ibid.*

[58] "I am a young girl while my husband is an old man."—*Ibid.*

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with a corpulent man,[59] and again, sometimes, a boy of 12 or 13 was coupled with a girl of full-blown youth.[60]

Evils of *kulinism*; dowry.

There is no doubt that these evils were more or less due to the influence of *kulinism* and to the system of dowry prevalent among the *kulins*. This was the time of triumphant *kulinism*. Among the Brahmins, the Mukhopādhāyas, the Chaṭṭopādhāyas and the Vandyopādhāyas occupied, in order, the chief places in the scale of *kulinism*.[61] Among the Kāyasthas also such places

59 "My husband is corpulent and pot-bellied."—*Ibid.*

60 "I am a *kulin's* daughter," said another woman, "and my youth has passed away in expectation of a bridegroom. Though I have been married after a long time, yet in age I shall be like an elder sister to my husband."—*Ibid*, p. 99. It is important to note that the poet here gives an exact picture of the society of the day where the girls, thus subject to misfortune by the inexorable laws of the society, could only weep and murmur amongst themselves but could not protest in words or deeds.

61 (*a*) My father, born in a Mukhopādhyāya family, belongs to the chief '*gotra*' and my husband, known as belonging to a Vandyopādhyāya family, is a great *kulin*."—Bhāratacandra, p. 61, B.E.

(*b*) "Anandīrāmā Mukhārjī, the ocean of kula" (*i.e.*, belonging to a very noble family).—*Ibid*, p. 6, B.E.

(*c*) "Many Mukhopādhyāyas, Chaṭṭopādhyāyas and Vňāḍarī Brahmins went along with him."—Tīrthamaṅgala by Vijayarāma. Here the poet describes the Bňāḍarīs as

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were occupied by the Ghoṣa, Vasu, and Mitra families.[62] So narrow and rigid were the customs of those *kulins* that one, belonging to an inferior status, was held in contempt by them and could not even sit by their side.[63] The *kulins* used their pedigrees as means of bettering their fortune and felt no scruple in relaxing the rigidity of their rules in the case of a wealthy man though the latter might be of an inferior descent.[64] Marriages in *kulin* families could never be celebrated peacefully; disputes and quarrels were sure to originate on some question or other.[65]

Polygamy,—a regular habit with the *kulins*.

The evils which this *kulinism* produced, were numerous and shocking. Polygamy had become a regular habit with the *kulins*, as they expected

kulins, but a Bňāḍarī Brahmin is known as one who has long lost his family honour (*kula*). Bhāratcandra does not refer to the Bňāḍarīs as *kulins*:—"Bňāḍarī Gokula Kṛpārāma Dayārāma."—p. 6, B.E.

62 "He married three daughters, blessed with beauty and virtue, of three chief *kulin* families, Ghoṣa, Vasu and Mitra."—Bhāratacandra, p. 57, B.E.

63 "My husband is abused as a *vāhāttare* (belonging to a low status) Kāyastha and cannot sit by the side of those belonging to high families."—Bhāratacandra, p. 54, B.E.

64 "Your house will be full of wealth and paddy and then all the *kulin* Kāyasthas will marry their sons and daughters in your family."—Bhāratacandra, p. 54, B.E.

65 "I know that there must be quarrels where there are *kulins*."—Bhāratacandra, p. 61.

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a substantial dowry in every marriage.[66] Under such circumstances any sincere attachment on the part of the husbands could hardly exist ; and the poor girls, being always pressed for more and more money by their unmatched and illiterate husbands, spent their days very miserably. They remained mostly in their father's house, where their husbands came once in two or three years only to exact their dues from them even to the farthing. Though early marriage was generally the rule yet in the case of a *kulin's* daughter the rule was very often violated.[67] Her parents were bound to wait till they could collect money sufficient for their daughter's dowry ; sometimes, from financial considerations, a girl of 11 or 12 was handed over as a wife to a grey-haired man.[68] This dowry system

Early marriage not observed in the case of a *kulin's* daughter.

[66] See note 62. "Anekera pati tñei pati mora vāma." —Bhāratacandra, p. " Plurality of wives is admitted throughout the East." Verelst, *View of the Rise, Progress, etc.*, p. 136. Stavorinus writes that the " evils of kulinism and polygamy were more shocking among the Brahmins than (among) the other castes."—*op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 440.

[67] " If he comes once in two or four years he demands presents of me just on coming to the bed. He will use sweet words if I can give him the little amount that I collect by selling the cotton yarn (prepared by me); otherwise he will go away dissatisfied."—Bhāratacandra, p. 99.

[68](*a*) " Umā has got a necklace of pearls round her neck while that old fellow has there a bead of bones. Alas !

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was not, however, compulsory, and never so shocking among the non-*kulins*.[69] Sometimes, among the lower classes, the practice was exactly the opposite, because among them the bridegroom had to pay a dowry to the bride.[70]

how will my darling Umā live in that old fellow's house. My darling Umā is an idyll of gold; how can that old lunatic fellow be called her husband ?"—Bhāratacandra, pp. 19-20, B.E.

(*b*) "My young daughter Gaurī is of innocent mind but I am going to marry her to an old man, who has passed three-fourths of his age.....I will not marry my darling Gaurī to this old fellow, so long as I am alive."—*Sivāyana* by Rāmeśvara, p. 29, B.E.

From these passages it appears that, under these traditional names of Śiva and Durgā, the poets have unfolded the dark picture of contemporary society. These realistic and minute descriptions were not the product of poetic fancy but were gathered from the actual facts of the social life of the day.

69 Craufurd, Vol. II, p. 56.

70 "I married newly by paying a dowry of Rs. 20, but I have not lived for a single day in my house."—Bhāratacandra, p. 118, B.E.

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Section 4.

Dress, Ornaments, etc.

Dresses and ornaments, used by the people of that age, varied amongst the different classes of the society. Generally, middle-class people used to wear a piece of cotton cloth and a piece of *dobajā* or *ekapāṭṭā* during the summer[1] and, during the winter, they protected themselves from cold, some by using another piece of cotton cloth (*dohār*) and some a *hāmām* or *glāp* over their body. Sometimes, during the winter, some of them managed to procure a *beniān* or *merjāi* for their upper bodies and *tope* or turban for their heads.[2] Some middle-class men of advanced age used *vanāts*[3] and *rejāis* (quilted chintz) at night. Boys protected themselves from cold by putting *dolāis* (muslin lined and bordered with calico) on their bodies. Silk cloths,[4] handkerchiefs and shawls[5] were generally used by the rich.

Variety of dresses.

[1] Stavorinus, *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 114.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 415.

[3] "He gave him a piece of *vanāt* with Rs. 50."—*Tīrthamaṅgala* by Vijayarāma, p. 85. *Vanāt*, a kind of cotton cloth.

[4] *Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita*, p. 34.

[5] "Some wear shawls while others are in want of a piece of torn cloth."—Rāmaprasāda's *Padāvalī*, p. 85, B.E.

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Leather slippers were used occasionally.[6] Before going to bed it was often the custom to wash one's feet and to come up to the bed-room with slippers on,[7] which were, however, left at the door. Craufurd refers to "slippers of fine woolen cloth, or velvet, which frequently are embroidered with gold or silver ; and those of princes at great ceremonies, even with precious stones." [8] The poor sometimes used wooden sandals instead of slippers. A piece of cotton cloth (*cādara*) was ordinarily used above the shoulder ; some, instead of it, put on a *jāmā*, "neatly shaped to the upper part of the body, falling very full from thence and extending so low as almost entirely to cover the feet." [9] The Muhammadans also wore a *jāmā* which, however, crossed over, and was tied on the right side of the breast, unlike that of the Hindus tied on the left. A muslin flash was occasionally wrapped round

"Kartāra maryādā bujhi subha Sitāba Raya ।
Śāla khilāta ghoḍā ādi dilena vidāya ॥"

Tīrthamaṅgala by Vijayarāma; Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 41.

[6] "The sound of leather slippers on their back that removed their skin."—Bhāratacandra, p. 66, B.E.; Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 415.

[7] "She prepared the bed carefully, and her lord entered the bedroom with slippers on his feet."—*Rāmāyaṇa* by Adbhutācārya, *Typical Selections, etc.*, pp. 567-68 ; Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 44.

[8] *Ibid*, p. 43.

[9] Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 415 ; Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 42.

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the waist of the rich.[10] Persons of high rank sometimes wore above the *jāmā* a "short close vest of fine-worked muslin;" on days of ceremonies and rejoicings, they put on rich bracelets on their arms and jewels on their turbans and strings of pearls round their necks hanging down upon the breast.[11] Stavorinus writes that many of them wore small earrings also.[12] In contemporary literature also we find that when Mādhava Bhāṭ expressed his willingness to go in search of Vidyā's bridegroom, Vīrasiṁha, father of Vidyā, out of gratification, rewarded Mādhava Bhāṭ with his necklace and other ornaments.[13] The use of shirts was not unknown.[14] "Phoenix's feathers"[15] were used by the rich in their dresses.[16] Haji Mustafa has

Use of ornaments by men on days of ceremonies.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] *Ibid*, p. 43.

[12] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 415.

[13] Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*, p. 3, B.E.

[14] "Aly Ibrahim Khan put on a plain shirt and a turban slightly rolled, and getting into his 'palkey' went to the court."—*Seir-ul-Mutakherin*, Vol. II, p. 448.

[15] "This was the name given by the Hindus to the Birds of Paradise which the Dutch import from the Moluccas with feathers and all."—*Ibid*, pp. 302-303, footnote.

[16] "The prince complied with the request, and the Vizier having carried Ramnarain into an adjoining tent, put the dress of honour upon his head, and adorned his head

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given the following description of a Hindusthani dress :—" There is so little difference between the Hindustany (*i.e.*, Muhammadan) dress of man and woman, that save the turban (which by the bye is worn by virgins of the royal blood and others) it requires the eye of skill and experience to state that difference and this consists in general in the *chola*, or close coat, which is much higher with women than with men ; in the *daman* or petticoat tacked to it, which is four times ampler in a woman than in a man ; and lastly in the lining of the hem, which is always in white with men, but of the most gaudy silks with women and those too adorned with lace." [17]

Hindusthani dress of men and women.

A special dress was used on the occasion of attending the royal *darbars* or amongst distinguished personages, and we have a description of it in contemporary literature.[18] This dress was characterised by a turban, adorned with diamonds and gems placed on the head and by belts fastened over the skirt in various fashions, and it was sometimes in a rich foreign style (*vilātī khelāt*).

Special dresses for special occasions.

with a circlet and an aigrett, remarkable by Phoenix feathers."—*Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 141, footnote ; Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 457.

[18] " Śire cīrā hīrā tāia vilātī khelāta gāīa
Nānā bandhe komara bāndhila | "
Bhāratacandra, p. 118, B_2E.

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The servants, who accompanied their masters on such occasions, also put on a rich dress.[19] Almost similar was the dress worn by a prince on the occasion of his visit to other countries,—the additional equipments being the use of precious ornaments, and weapons like the sword, bow and arrows, etc., for the purpose of defence.[20] The rich had personal dressing rooms (*toṣākhānā*), where wardrobes were kept.[21] Clothes and garments of the well-to-do men were washed by washermen,[22] though the poor perhaps washed their clothes themselves. Scholars generally put on simple and plain dresses[23] as the traditional Hindu idea that the votaries of learning should be above the material comforts of this world had not yet lost ground.

Plain and simple dresses for scholars.

[19] *Cf.* the dress of Dāsu and Vāsu, the two servants of Bhavānanda Majumdāra in *ibid.*

[20] Bhāratacandra, p. 64, B.E.

[21] "Rāma Siṁha Rāi went into the dressing room."—*Tirthamaṅgala* by Vijayarāma, p. 13.

[22] "In the morning the washerman went to the tank and first brought out that piece of cloth."—Rāmaprasāda, p. 30, B. E., and also p. 69, B.E.

[23] "Dvāri kahe eki haya paḍuāra veśa naya
Khuṅgi puṅthi dhuti dhare tārā | "
("The gateman replied that it could not be so for he had not the dress of scholars who used only a piece of cotton cloth and carried books with them in book-cases."—Bhāratacandra, p. 68, B.E.

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Dresses of women.

The women belonging to the middle or poor classes generally put on only one piece of cotton cloth (*saḍī*) ;[24] in the winter they covered their bodies with an additional piece of cotton cloth.[25] Women of inferior classes wore a kind of coarse cloth, made probably of jute (*khuñā*), which has been referred to contemptuously by a contemporary poet.[26] *Tasar* cloths were also in use. The dresses of Hindu women belonging to rich families were usually very costly and of exquisite beauty. These consisted of different kinds of fine cotton or silk cloths or *sāḍīs*, manufactured at Dāccā or at Nadiā. Bhāratacandra refers to fine *sāḍīs*.[27] He has also referred to another kind of *sāḍī* (*nīlāmbarī*) in the description of the love-worn Vidyā.[28] *Sāḍīs* set with gold and jewels were used,[29] and a close jacket or a bust-bodice (*kāñculī*)

[24] Stavorinus, *op. cit*, Vol. I, p. 415.

[25] *Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita*, p. 34.

[26] "Khuñā-tñāti haye deha tasarete hāta."—Bhāratacandra, p. 52. B.E.

[27] "Knotting the hair quickly and putting on a glistening *sāḍī*."—Bhāratacandra, p. 128, B.E.

[28] Bhāratacandra, p. 76, B.E.

[29] "After wearing various items of dress, she put on a *kāñculī* over her breasts, and veiled her head with a scarf interwoven with gold."—Bhavāṇīśaṅkara's *Caṇḍīkāvya* (1779 A.D.). *Vide Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 372.

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was also worn ;[30] the use of this appears to have been universal (*cf.* note 30). Bust bodices made of lac were also in use.[31] Figures (especially of the ten *Avatāras*)[32] were drawn with gold thread on the women's *orṇās* and bodices of various colours ; these of different descriptions were universally used.[33] Craufurd has referred to an *orṇā* style in the following language :—"A wide piece of Muslin is thrown over the left shoulder, which passing under the right arm is crossed round the middle, and being fastened by tucking part of it under the piece of cloth that is wrapped round the loins, hangs down to the feet."[34] *Ghāgurīs* (skirts) were also worn.[35]

[30] Bhāratacandra, p. 163, B.E. ; Craufurd, Vol. II, p. 45.

[31] "Hṛdaye parila save lakṣera kñaculī" (they all put on *kñāculīs* made of lac on their breasts).—Saṅkaradāsera *Bhāgavata*, *Typical Selections*, Part I, pp. 909-10 ; Bhāratacandra, p. 93, B.E.

[32] "My heart yearns greatly after you, and I know not who has given you this beautiful *kāñculī* ; various figures are visible on it and its beauty resembles that of the full moon."—Dvija Bhavāṇī's *Harivaṁśa*, *Typical Selections*, Part II, pp. 234-36. Compare with this the description of Bhagavatī in Mukundarāma's *Kavikaṅkaṇacaṇḍī*.

[33] "I saw the women in every house wearing *kñaculīs* and *orṇās*."—Bhāratacandra, p. 163, B.E. Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita ; Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 415.

[34] Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 45.

[35] "They covered their breasts carved out of wood with *kñāculīs* and their bellies made high with linen were

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Hair-dressing.

The hair was commonly rolled up into a knot or coil at the back of the head, and was fastened with hair-pins.[36] Different kinds of ribbons, including those decorated with lacquer-work, were used in coiffure ;[37] some trailed curls hanging on their back even down to the hips ;[38] the hair was well combed and dressed,[39] and on occasions of festivities, scented hair-oils were used.[40] Besides

covered with *ghāgrās* (skirts)."—Bhāratacandra, p. 96. Perhaps such dresses were used in Bengal as much as in up country.

36 "Quickly rolling up the hair into a knot and putting on a fine *sāḍī*."—Bhāratacandra, p. 128, B.E. Carufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 45.

37 "Lakṣera jāda diā kuntala bāndhila" (She wove her hair into a braid with ribbons made of lac).—Saṅkaradāsa's *Bhāgavata*, *Typical Selections*, Part I, pp. 909-10.

38 "Nitambe dolaye veṇī dekhite sundara" (the beautiful plaited hair hanging down to her hips). *Ibid.*

39 Āñcare ciruṇe cāru cāñcara cikura (her beautiful curling hair was dressed with a comb).—Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*. "Āñcariā keśa-pāśa pariā uttama vāsa (after combing her hair and putting on a fine dress).—Bhāratacandra, p. 167.

"Kiśorī karaye veśa ciruṇī laiyā" (the young girl engaged in toilet with a comb).—Śaṅkaradāsa's *Bhāgavata, Typical Selections*, Part, I, p. 909.

40 "Sugandhī tailete kare cikura-bandhana" (she braided her hair with scented hair-oils applied).—Goālinīra rupavarṇanā in Candrakānta, *Typical Selections*, Part II, p. 1412.

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these, flowers were used by them to adorn their coils or braids of hair.[41] The flowers most prized for this were the Campā, Vakula, Juthi and Mālatī. The poets of the time have referred to flowers in their descriptions of the costumes of a goddess, of a Zamindar's wife, as well as of a milkmaid; so we can well conclude that flowers were used in the common toilet of women belonging to all sections of the society. Those who could afford to spend something, adorned their hair with gold bodkins.[42]

Use of flowers.

Āmalakī was used in toilet by all[43] but the richer women used sándal-paste, *cuā* (distilled essences or *āttars*), *kumkuma* (saffron) and *kasturī* (musk), to enhance their complexion and charms.[44] A woman whose

Other articles used in toilet by women.

41 "Cuḍā chānde bāndhā cula, tāhāte cāmpāra phula." (Her hair was done up like a crown and round its tapering form strings of campā flowers were wound).—Bhāratacandra, p. 134, B. E.

"Chňedā cule, vakul-phule, khoňpā bňedhecha." (You have coiled your thinned falling hairs with Vakula flowers).—Bhāratacandra, p. 195, B.E.

"Khňopāra cāmpāra phula atisuśobhana (with beautiful campa flowers on the knot of her hair).—Goālinīra Rupa-varṇanā in Candrakānta, *Typical Selections*, Part II, p. 1412.

42 Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 415.

43 "She rubbed her hair with *āmalakī*."—Śaṅkaradasā's *Bhāgavata*, *Typical Selections*, Part I, pp. 909-10.

44 "She applied on her body sandal, otto, saffron and musk."

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husband was living, wore vermilion [45] in different ways, as a round beauty-spot on the brow, or pasted on half the forehead in a crescent, or as a bright streak in the parting of the hair ; and she put on *lohā* (a single iron bracelet) on her left hand.[46] She was distinguished also by the use of bracelets of conchshells (*śñākhā*), bordered *sāḍīs*, sandal-paste, betel and betelnuts [47]; sometimes she used collyrium to paint her eyes [48] and staining powder for her teeth.[49] She decorated her feet with paint on anklet-chains (*'cik'*) designed

[45] "The beauty of vermilion on her forehead dispels the darkness."—Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*. "Some painted with vermilion half of their forehead."—*Bhavānī-maṅgala* by Gaṅgānārāyaṇa. "The vermilion on her forehead looked very bright."—Śaṅkaradāsa's *Bhāgavat*, *Typical Selections*, Part I, pp. 909-10. "The vermilion spot on the forehead looked very beautiful."—Dvija Bhavāṇi's Rāmāyaṇa, *Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 538. Bhāratacandra, p. 128, B. E.

[46] "Āyatira cinha hāte lohā ekagāchi."—Bhāratacandra, p. 54, B.E.

[47] "Śñākhā sāḍī sindura candana pāna-guā ।
nāhi dekhi āyati kevala ācābhuyā." ॥
Bhāratacandra, p. 26, B. E.

[48] (*a*) "With *vesara* on their nose and collyrium in their eyes."—Jayanārāyaṇa's *Harilīlā*.

(*b*) "Used collyrium in her eyes."—Śaṅkaradāsa's *Bhāgavata*, *Typical Selections*, Part I, pp. 909-10.

[49] "With collyrium in their eyes and staining powder on their teeth."—Goālinīra Rupa-varṇanā in Candrakānta, *Typical Selections*, Part II, p. 1412.

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with red lac-dye (*āltā*).[50] Sometimes bracelets made of ivory[51] and of red shellac were also used.[52]

Use of ornaments of various kinds.

Ornaments of various kinds, both of gold and silver, were used by the women.[53] Those belonging to the middle class generally used *naṭh*[54] and

50 "Āltāra cika pare cňadera bājāra."—*Umāra-vivāha* by Ānandamayī, *Typical Selections*, Part II, pp. 1872-74.

51 "Beautiful bracelets made of ivory."—Śaṅkara-dāsa's *Bhāgavata*, *Typical Selections*, Part I, pp. 909-10.

52 Bhāratcandra, p. 93, B. E.

53 Stavorinus, *op. cit*, Vol. I, p. 415.

54 *Ibid.*

(*a*) "This ring called Nutt and the only part of the Indian finery which Europeans cannot bring themselves to like is always the distinctive ornament of the mistress of the house. It is that which the bridegroom never fails to send to his bride and the article on which falls most debate at that time.....This ring which is of gold may be half a line in thickness upon a circumference of about four inches; and it is passed through the left cartilage of the nostrils. At the lower part of the navel are two round pearls of value divided only by a ruby somewhat flattened."—Haji Mustafa in *Seir-ul-Mutakherin*, Vol. II, p. 585, footnote.

(*b*) "With bangles on hands, *kuṇdalas* on her ears, *vesara* on her nose and collyrium in her eyes."—Jayanārāyaṇa's *Harilīlā*.

(*c*) *Cf.* "the pearls of the Naṭh were of the value of Rs. 100 or Rs. 200, upon which hung five pearls as *nolakas*; between the two big pieces of pearls was a shining ruby, as a pomegranate seed between the two beaks of a Śuka

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vesara on the nose, different kinds of ear-rings, such as *kuṇdala*,[55] *nala-jhumkā*, *dhñerī-jhumkā*,[56] *pāsā*,[57] in their ears, gold bangles and bracelets on their hands, and *bājus* on their arms just above the elbows.[58] A kind of ornament (*sm̃ithi*) was used to cover just the parting of the hair, along with another called *ṭāra* or *ṭāirā*, hanging in a curve on the forehead.[59] Ornaments like *nūpuras* (anklets) were used for the feet as well.[60]

bird."—Jayanārāyaṇa's '*Kāśī-varṇanā*,' *Typical Selections*, Part II, p. 1519.

55 *Vide* note 54 (*b*).

56 "Karṇabhuṣā maṇi dhñerī kāru karṇafule |
Jaḍita jhumkā kāru tāra adhah dole ||"
Same as in note 54 (*c*).

57 "She had a gentle speech, a laughing countenance and *pāsās* in her ears."—Goālinīra Rupa-varṇanā in Candra-kānta.

58(*a*) "All the women put on beautiful clothes and gold ornaments, beautiful shells, ivory and gold bangles, and '*bājus*' (armlets set with various jewels), and tassels of wonderful make on their arms."—Saṅkaradāsa's *Bhāgavata*, *Typical Selections*, Part I, pp. 909-10. All these ornaments have been mentioned by Jayanārāyaṇa in his description of Kāśī. He further mentions bracelets made of rhinoceros horns (*gaṇḍārera cūḍi*) and bracelets of blue colour (*nīlā-cuḍi*), probably glass ones.

(*b*) "The daily change in the use of ornaments like bracelets, bangles, *bāju*, *sm̃ithi*, *ṭāra*."—Bhāratacandra, p. 167, B.E.

59 *Vide* note 58 (*b*).

60(*a*) "The *nūpuras* (anklets) and *kiṅkiṇīs* (bracelets) produced various sounds."—Rāmaprasāda, pp. 17-18.

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Ordinarily silver ornaments like *pňāijora, mala,* and *pāsulī* were used on feet, ankles and toes respectively.[61] Gold rings were used on fingers[62] and fine necklaces of different designs were worn round the neck ; these necklaces were composed of three, five or seven chains clasped together at the back, or of a single string round about the neck, three, five or seven times (*tri-laharī, pňāca-nara, sāta-nara, kaṇṭha-mālā*).[63] Women belonging to the royal or zamindar families used, over and above these, ornaments of a finer quality and greater value. A

(*b*) "Afterwards they put on *nūpuras* (anklets) on their feet."—The manuscript *Bhavānīmaṅgala.*

[61](*a*) "Caranete vaṅka *mala* dila tinaṭhari."—*Umāravivāha* by Ānandamayī, *Typical Selections, etc.*, Part I, pp. 1872-73.

(*b*) "They affixed '*pichiās*' between her toes and gold anklets on her feet."—Saṅkaradāsa's *Bhāgavata, Typical Selections,* Part I, pp. 909-10.

(*c*) "They wear bracelets on their arms, rings in their ears, on their fingers, their ankles and toes, and sometimes a small ring on one side of the nostril."—Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

[62] "Kaḍiā aṅguli madhye ratana-aṅgurī" (a jewelled ring on little finger).—Saṅkaradāsa's *Bhāgavata, Typical Selections,* Part I, pp. 909-10.

[63](*a*) "She put on a beautiful necklace of seven strings. The necklace was wreathed together with silver, gold, ivory, pearls and rubies."—*Ibid.*

(*b*) "A beautiful necklace of three strings adorned her breast by hanging upon it."—Jayanārāyaṇa's Kāśīvarṇanā, *Typical Selections,* pp. 1519-21.

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contemporary poet[64] has left a description of a necklace worn by a queen; it had 20,000 pearls in six strings, and was further adorned with gems, rubies and diamonds, and the locket of the necklace was as bright as the full moon; its price was estimated to be 3 lac and 36 thousand rupees.

[64] Jayanārāyaṇa Sena's *Harilīlā*. Jayanārāyaṇa was a relative of Raja Rajaballabha of Dacca and was himself a very rich man. His estimate of the price of the gems and rubies in the necklaces may be regarded as somewhat accurate. We can very well compare this description of ornaments in mid-eighteenth century with the following in Ghanarāma's *Dharmamaṅgala*, written about 1713 A.D., a generation or two earlier:—

" Ārope alakā-kole mukutāra pñāti |
Sīmante raciā dila suvarṇera sīthi ||
Aṅga-para apurva aneka alaṅkāra |
Pravāla puraṭapñāti gaja-moti-hāra ||
Do-suti te-suti moti-hema-kaṇṭha-mālā |
Gorāgāya gaja-moti garva kare bhālā ||

* * * *

Kāne pare kuṇḍala kanaka-kāṭā kaḍi |
Sahaje sundarī tāya veśa kare vāḍi ||
Karete kaṅkana śankha vāju-bāndhā chaḍā |

* * * *

Parila puraṭa-ṭāra vicitra bāuli |
Kaṭite kiṅkiṇī pare padāgre pāśulī ||
Apara se paḍa-bhūṣā pātā-goṭā-mala | "

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Women belonging to middle-class families were generally satisfied with gold ornaments like *naṭh* and single-string long necklace (*kaṇṭha-mālā*), and a few other silver ornaments. The poorest could hardly indulge in the use of gold or silver ornaments, and remained content with ornaments made of brass or other inferior metals.[65] Stavorinus writes that the women of the lower classes wore a kind of ornament "made of a sort of cowries, brought from the Maldive islands," which the Bengalees had "the art of sawing through, so that every cutting makes a ring."[66]

Bed-room equipments.

A few words may be added here with regard to bed-room equipments. The rich and middle-class people generally slept on bedsteads covered with various kinds of bed-sheets. Pillows of different shapes (*tākiyā*, *girdā*) were in use, and one had generally two or three pillows (one under the head, another by the feet, and another on one side).[67] Sometimes, a canopy was spread in the bed-room just over the bed.[68]. Mosquito-nets were also in use.[69]

[65] Kṣitīśāvaṁśāvalīcarita, p. 38.

[66] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 415-16.

[67] (*a*) Rāmaprasāda, p. 25.

(*b*) *Rāmāyaṇa* by Adbhutācārya, *Typical Selections*, etc., Part I, pp. 567-68.

[68] "They spread a canopy inside the room."—*Ibid.*

[69] *Ibid.* "Look at your face after removing the mosquito-net."—Rāmaprasāda, p. 100 (B.E.).

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Carpets of various kinds were spread in the rooms, in which the Zamindars and other rich people used to sit and transact their business. A contemporary poet, while speaking of the house of Raja Sundar Singh of Ticary in the Gaya district, refers to such carpets.[70]

Articles of luxury.

Lastly, it would be interesting to know something about the articles of luxury in which the wealthy people of the age indulged. These were of two kinds : [71] (*i*) Articles for Toilet, and (*ii*) Food Articles. With regard to the former, the following deserve notice : (*a*) rose water, *ātara*, *cuā* (perfumes prepared with distilled essence), musk, sandal-paste, saffron, etc. ; (*b*) garlands of flowers like *cm̃āpā*, *mālatī*, *mallikā*, etc. No less rich were the luxurious food articles, which consisted of different kinds of sweetmeats, such as *maṇḍā*, *manoharā*, *rasakarā*, *vātāsā*, *sarabhāja*, *elāci-dānā*, *luci*, *sugar*, *sugar-candy*, *condensed milk* (*kṣīra*), or *cream*,

[70] Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, p. 106 :—" There were many beautiful and big buildings, with carpets spread in the rooms." It is also important to note that such carpets were manufactured locally.

" Dulicā gālicā āra satarañcī kata ।
kharida karite āila loka śata-śata ॥ "

(Hundreds of people came to buy carpets of *dulicā*, *gālicā* and *satarañcī* varieties.—*Ibid*, p. 108.)

[71] (*a*) Rāmaprasāda, p. 15 (B.E.).
(*b*) Bhāratacandra, p. 79 (B.E.).
(*c*) Rāmāyaṇa by Adbhutācārya.

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curd, cocoanut pieces or *gratings mixed with sugar, cooled Ganges-water scented with camphor, betel-nuts and betels prepared with stone-lime, cardamon* (*elācī*), *cloves* (*lavaṅga*), *nutmeg* (*jāyaphala*) *and mace* (*jayitrī*). Fine hand-fans of peacock-feathers and white chowries (*cāmara*) were also used by luxurious persons for enjoyment of cool breeze. This account is based in every detail on the writings of the contemporary authors, and the descriptions by them of the habits of Zamindar families might equally apply to all the wealthy people of those times. In all ages, the standard of living depends much on the possession and distribution of wealth, and it is probable that a moneyed man in Bengal of the mid-eighteenth century, whether he belonged to a Zamindar family or not, could with equal facility procure these articles of luxury for himself.

The use of flowers, garlands, sandal and musk, etc., shows that the well-to-do people of Bengal in that age were not wholly devoid of finer aesthetic tastes, which may compare favourably with those of the present age.

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Section 5.

Relations between the Hindus and the Muhammadans.

Living side by side for centuries together, the Hindu and Muhammadan communities had borrowed each other's ideas and customs.[1] Whenever two types of civilisation come into contact with each other, it is natural that one will exercise its influence on the other. Hinduism had stood patiently before the onrush of the militant forces of Islam without losing its assimilative power in the least, and as soon as the storm had subsided, it cast its influence on the followers of Islam. Similarly, the influence of Islam also affected the Hindu society to some extent. With the gradual increase in the number of Hindu converts and with the disappearance of the feelings of bigotry from the minds of the masses, this process of assimilation and interchange of customs and thoughts drew the two communities

[1] *Vide* the article by Mr. Mazhal-ul-Haque in the *Statesman of the 17th November, 1910*, referred to by Dr. D. C. Sen in his "*History of Bengali Language and Literature*," pp. 794-95.

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closer. It is worthy of note that we find important illustrations of this mutual assimilation of customs and thought even in the age of the great orthodox emperor Aurangzeb. Alwal, a Muhammadan poet, translated the Hindi poem '*Padmāvat*' into Bengali and wrote several poems on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the 17th century.[2] Dr. D. C. Sen has noted that "the manuscripts of Padmāvat hitherto obtained, all belong to the border lands of Aracan in the backwoods of Chittagong, copied in Persian characters and preserved by the rural Muhammadan folk of those localities. No Hindu has ever yet cared to read them. This goes to prove how far the taste of the Muhammadans was imbued with Hindu culture. This book, that we should have thought could be interesting only to Hindu readers, on account of its lengthy disquisitions on theology and Sanskrit rhetoric, has been strangely preserved, ever since Aurugzeb's time, by Moslems for whom it could apparently have no attraction, nay to whom it might even seem positively repellent. From the time of Magana Ṭhākur, the Muhammadan minister, till the time of Shaik Hamidulla of Chittagong who published it in 1893—covering a period of nearly 250 years, this book

Mutual assimilation of customs and thought ;— important illustrations in the reign of Aurangzeb;

[2] *Ibid*, p. 624.

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was copied, read, and admired by the Muhammadans of Chittagong exclusively.'' [3] In Kṣemānanda's '*Manasāmaṅgala*,' written towards the latter part of the 17th century, there is a passage which tells us that in the steel-chamber prepared for Lakṣmindra, a copy of the Koran was kept along with other sacred charms to avert Manasā Devī's wrath.[4]

and by the middle of the eighteenth century.

By the middle of the 18th century, this process of mutual assimilation had greatly advanced. Sahamat Jang and Saulat Jang (nephews of Nawab Allahvardi) once enjoyed the *Holi* festival, for seven days, in the garden of Motijhil.[5] On that occasion about 200 reservoirs had been filled with coloured-water, and heaps of *ābira* (red-powder) and saffron had been collected ; and more than five hundred charming girls,[6] dressed in costly robes and jewels, used to appear in a body every morning and evening mustering from every part of the garden. After the treaty of Alinagar (9th February, 1757), Nawab Sirajuddowla proceeded to Murshidabad

[3] *Ibid*, p. 626.

[4] *Ibid*, pp. 288, 793.

[5] *Muzaffarnamah*, pp. 86*a*-86*b*. The author of *Muzaffarnamah* was himself present on this occasion.

[6] There was a set of such professional dancing-girls, who could not be certainly classed with the ordinary gentle-women of the society (*cf.* Edward Ives', Craufurd's and Stavorinus' references to "Dancing girls").

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and enjoyed the '*Holi*' festival in his palace at Mansurganj.[7] Once when at Azimabad, Nawab Mir Jafar crossed the Ganges with all the gentry of the town and engaged himself in enjoying the '*Holi*' festival.[8] It is said that, on his death-bed, Mir Jafar drank a few drops of water poured in libation over the idol of Kirīteśwarī.[9] The Muhammadans offered '*pujā*' in Hindu temples,

[7] *Muzaffarnamah*, p. 123*b*.

[8] (*a*) *Ibid*, p. 137*a*. It is important to note that not only Mir Jafar but also all the gentry of the city took part in the festival. On this occasion Mir Jafar amused himself in the company of a woman named Ferzana, who might be regarded as an example of that type of professional girls, five hundred of whom had been engaged by Sahmat Jang and Saulat Jang.

(*b*) "Not content with that he (Mir Jafar) ordered a sandy spot in the river, through which ran a small stream, to be surrounded by cloth-walls and there he spent some days, in fulfilling the rites of that Gentoo festival, the last of which consists in throwing handfuls of dust and coloured earth at each other and syringing coloured water on one another's clothes."—*Seir-ul-Mutakherin*, Vol. II, p. 266.

[9] "Several persons of credit have affirmed that some moments before his demise, he had, on Nandecomer's persuasion, ordered to be brought to him some water that had been poured in libation over the idol at Kyirut-conah (a famous temple of the Gentoos in the neighbourhood of Murshidabad) and that some drops of it were poured down to the dying man's throat."—*Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 558. It is worthy of note that a Hindu could, without any hesitation, offer a Moslem for drink the water of libation poured on a Hindu idol and that it was drunk in faith.

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as the Hindus offered '*sirṇī*' at Muhammadan moques.[10] Dr. D. C. Sen has noted that "in Chittagong this fusion of ideas and interchange of customs and usages seem to have reached its highest point. In a Bengali poem called the Behulā Sundarī, written by Hāmidullā of Chittagong, we read that the Brahmins who had assembled to find out an auspicious day for the hero's journey abroad, consulted the Koran for the purpose. The hero, who was the son of an orthodox Hindu merchant, obeyed the injunctions 'as if they were laid down in the Vedas' and started on his voyage, praying to 'Allah' for his safety...Āptābuddin, another Mohammadan poet of Chittagong, who wrote a poem called Jamil Dilārām in 1750 A.D., writes that his hero, who was a Muhammadan, went to the nether worlds to seek a boon from the Saptarsies or the seven sages of the Hindus." [11]

This interchange of ideas and customs had long ago led to the evolution of a common god, *Satya Pīra*, worshipped by Hindus and Muhammadans alike.[12]

Evolution of the worship of a common God, Satya Pira, by the Hindus and the Muhammadans alike.

We find in Bhāratacandra's poem on '*Satya Pīra*' that a Hindu merchant named Sadānanda got

[10] Dr. D. C. Sen's *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, p. 793.

[11] *Ibid*, p. 796.

[12] Compare the numerous poems on *Satya Pīra*, written in old Bengali, *vide ibid*, pp. 396-97.

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a daughter by favour of the god Satya Pīra, whom he had promised some offerings; but very soon the merchant forgot to make his offerings, and incurred the wrath of the said god, as a result of which his son-in-law met with a premature death.[13] It is related in the work '*Samasera Gājira Pňuthi*' that one night a Hindu goddess appeared thrice before the Gāji in his dreams, and in obedience to her behest the Gāji worshipped her the next morning with the help of the Brahmins and according to due rites.[14] A Bengali document[15] (dated 1732 A.D.), which marks the victory of the Sahajiyā cult over the Orthodox Vaiṣṇava cult, has got a few Muhammadan signatories as its witnesses and it is really worthy of notice

Worship of Hindu gods by Muhammadans.

Muhammadan signatories in a document dealing with Vaiṣṇava religious matters.

[13] *Bhāratacandra's Granthāvalī* (New Victoria Press Publication), p. 1.

[14] "Summon the Brahmins, if you do not worship yourself; otherwise the victory in the battle is not for you. In this way she appeared thrice in his dream and he took fright on hearing of the battle. Leaving his bed in the morning, the Gāji pondered over the matter for some time, and (at last) duly worshipped the Goddess by summoning the Brahmins."—Samasera Gājira Pňuthi, *Typical Selections*, Part II, p. 1851.

[15] S. R. Mitra, *Types of Early Bengali Prose* and *Typical Selections*, Part II, pp. 1638-43.

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that even in matters of social and religious changes the opinion and testimony of the Muhammadans were sought and obtained by their Hindu brethren. Many of the Muhammadans believed in the principles of Hindu astrology and were as particular in observing them as the Hindus.[16] We find that the Muslim Nawabs like Sarfaraz and Allahvardi started on their journeys or undertook expeditions at auspicious moments. "Mircasim understood a little of astrology and believed in its maxims and predictions; he procured the child's horoscope to be accurately drawn by able astrologers."[17] When we study the number of works composed by Muslim writers of that age, in praise of the Hindu gods and goddesses and on Hindu music,[18] we

Principles of Hindu astrology understood and observed by the Muhammadans.

[16] "So that between the Mahomedan and Gentoo astrologers together, one half of the year is taken up in unlucky days. The head astrologer is ever present at all their councils; no new enterprise is begun without his being first consulted and his veto is as effectual as that of a Tribune in the Roman Senate."—Scrafton, *Reflections on the Government of Indostan*, p. 17.

[17] *Seir-ul-Mutakherin*, Vol. II, p. 387.

[18] *Vide History of Bengali Language and Literature*, pp. 798-804, and *Prācīna Pŭthir Vivaraṇa* by Abdul Karim.

"In his work called *'Pada-kalpataru,'* composed in the 18th century, Vaiṣṇavadāsa has quoted the *'padas'* (songs in praise of Vaiṣṇava gods) of 11 Muslim writers."—Dr. D. C. Sen's article on "*Baṅgabhāṣāra Upara Musalmānera*

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cannot but conclude that the Vaiṣṇava and orthodox Hindu notions and thoughts had deeply influenced the inner stratum of Muhammadan society in Bengal. Thus, in the field of ordinary life the two communities were living side by side in harmony and mutual attachment.

In ordinary life, the two communities were living in harmony and mutual attachment.

But, the relations between the prominent members of the two communities, living in the court circles, were sometimes very bitter, though it did not affect so much the internal life of the country.[19] This was due principally to two important changes which had greatly influenced the political condition of Bengal; one was the gradual weakening of the Imperial authority at Delhi and the consequent rise of upstarts and adventurers like Murshid Kuli or Allahvardi as provincial governors, and the other was the emergence and active participation of great European powers in the field of Indian politics. "There was a revival of Hindu feeling coincident with the gradual weakening of the

Bitter relations in court circles.

prabhāva" in the Bengali Magazine '*Bicitrā*,' Magh 1335, B. S.

[19] "Yet an Englishman cannot but wonder to see how little the subjects in general are affected by any revolution in the Government; it is not felt beyond the small circle of the court."—Scrafton, *Reflections on the Government of Indostan*, p. 32.

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Muhammadan power," and the Hindu aristocrats and zamindars sought to utilise this opportunity to redress their long-felt grievances. Nothing could efface from their minds the memory of the cruelties and oppressions of Murshid Kuli practised barely a generation ago and they now wanted 'to feed fat their ancient grudge ;' so they allied themselves with the English to overthrow the upstart Nawabs of Bengal.[20] Colonel Scott wrote to one of his friends in 1754 that the "Jentue (Hindu) Rajahs and inhabitants were much disaffected to the Moor (Muhammadan) Government and secretly wished for a change and opportunity of throwing off their tyrannical yoke." [21]

[20] This was quite in keeping with the tradition of Indian history. Since the days of Alexander's invasion, it had become, as it were, the fashion of the aggrieved or the weaker party to invite or welcome a foreign power. Ambhi, King of Taxila, sided with Alexander against the powerful Hindu monarch Porus ; Jaychandra invited Muhammad Ghori against Prithviraj ; Daulat Khan and Alam Khan invited Babar against Ibrahim Lodi ; and here also the Hindu aristocrats and zamindars greatly helped the establishment of the British power in Bengal. Mr. Hill is of opinion that it was the special advantage of the English,—their "power was based on a firm commercial footing and the grants made by the Emperor, which they could enforce in exact proportion with the weakness of the local Government,"—that attracted the Hindus towards the English.—Hill, *Bengal in 1756-1757*, Introduction, lii.

[21] *Ibid*, Vol. III, p. 328.

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As long as the strong hands of Allahvardi held the reins of power this feeling of discontent was not expressed by those Hindu aristocrats, and by tact and sagacity, the former was able to utilise their services. Orme has remarked :— "Thus the Gentoo connection became the most opulent influence in the government of which it pervaded every department with such efficacy, that nothing of moment could move without their participation or knowledge nor did they ever deceive their benefactor but co-operated to strengthen his administration and to relieve his wants ; and it is said that the Seats (Seths) alone gave him in one present the enormous sum of three millions of rupees as a contribution to support the expenses of the Marattoe war." [22] But it is doubtful if this attachment was a sincere one, bound by mutual love and sympathy. Both Allahvardi and his Hindu officers were prompted by political considerations, and one could not easily dispense with the other without prejudicing his own interest. The very language of Orme that " nothing of moment could move without their participation or knowledge" shows the increased influence of the Hindu officials whose support Allahvardi was probably anxious and careful to secure in order to combat successfully with the Maratha hordes or the Afghan

[22] Orme, *History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 53.

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rebels. The Hindu aristocrats and zamindars also supported the government of Allahvardi as it was fighting against the Marathas who were but exacting plunderers of their wealth and property.[23] Not to speak of Allahvardi, Jagat Seth would have supported any one coming forward to drive out those Marathas, who had sacked his banks and had robbed him of two crores.

When the administration of the country fell into the hands of Sirajuddowla, the loyalty of those Hindu politicians vanished, and most of them, with the exception of three or four, such as Ramnarayan,[24] Meer Madan, Mohanlal and Ramram Singh of Midnapur, joined in the 'great conspiracy' of 1757 against the Nawab. During the first governorship of Mir Jafar, the relations between him and the Hindu officers like Ramnarayan and Rai Durlabh were rather hostile, and

[23] When a country is attacked by any external force or is tormented by a civil war, its peaceful citizens would quite naturally rally round their monarch, if he make a sincere effort to drive out those evils. All questions of personal likes or dislikes vanish, for the time being, before considerations of practical necessity.

[24] "Of all the Gentoos Ramnarain seems to have been the only man, who did not join the conspiracy against Seerajah Dowlah and who had given the French party a warm reception at Patna, as he regarded it as an important source for Seerajah Dowlah in case hostilities should be renewed with the English."—Orme, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 166.

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it was only the support of the English which saved them from the wrath of the Nawab.[25] Had Mir Kasim been ably supported by Shitab Ray and his party, then perhaps the affairs might have taken a different turn and the English would not have been so easily victorious against him. The attitude of Shitab Ray towards Mir Kasim was all along hostile, and no one can deny that the cause of the English East India Company was greatly furthered by the assistance of Shitab Ray, his son Kalyan Singh, Maharajah Beni Bahadur and Rai Sadhoram. Mir Kasim tried his utmost to employ Shitab Ray in his service, but the latter was too distrustful of him to accept any[26]; on the contrary, he spared no pains to poison the mind of the English against the Nawab and was greatly instrumental in bringing about his downfall. Kalyan Singh has himself[27] related in plain words

[25] Orme, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 196. For details, *vide* Orme, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 277-359; Scrafton, *Reflections on the Government of Indostan*, pp. 104-14.

[26] "He had no trust or confidence in the Nawab. He considered him unprincipled, faithless and treacherous, and did not wish to have anything to do with him."—*Khulāṣat-ut-Tawārikh*, p. 102*a*.

[27] "In this manner I used to call on the Nawab Wazir for a long time, when he always gave me a most patient hearing. In all my talks I impressed upon him the desirability of cultivating friendship with Mir Jafar and the English officials who were men of honour, and

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his own activities, those of his father, of Maharajah Beni Bahadur and of Rai Sadhoram in favour of the English. They greatly popularised the English cause at the courts of the Delhi Emperor and of the Nawab Wazir of Oudh, and persuaded the Emperor to grant the Dewani to the East India Company on the 12th of August, 1765.[28] They could not forget their jealousy of Mir Kasim even when the latter was a helpless fugitive in the camp of the Nawab Wazir.[29]

Supporters or partisans of the English were almost all Hindus or protégés of the Hindus.

The supporters and partisans of the English were almost all Hindus or protégés of the Hindus. The English refugees at Fulta (in 1756) were greatly helped in their distress by the neighbouring Hindu Zamindar, Rājā Navakṛṣṇa,[30] and by some of the merchants [31] of

avoiding Mir Kasim Khan who was a fickle-minded man of no character."—*Khulāṣat-ut-Tawārikh*, the chapter on "An account of Maharaja Sitab Ray—Reinstallation of Mir Jafar—Last days of Mir Kasim, etc...."

28 *Ibid.*

29 "Maharaj Beni Bahadur, for some reasons best known to himself, intrigued against Mir Md. Kassim Khan. The Nawab Wazir was persuaded to pass an order for the imprisonment of Mir Kasim Khan and the demolition of his house."—*Ibid.*

30 "When the English were on board at Fulta, Raja Naba Kissen helped them greatly."—Long, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

31 The petition of Gangaram Tagore and Locoor

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Calcutta, though Nawab Sirajuddowla had passed strict orders against helping them in any way. Most of the Company's *gomastas* belonged to the Hindu community [32] and the native commissioners in Calcutta about the year 1758 were all, with two or three exceptions, Hindus.[33] Similar were the men who were favoured on account of their connections with those native commissioners.[34] Thus, the support of the powerful Hindu aristocrats and zamindars greatly

Support of the Hindu aristocrats and zamindars greatly advanced the cause of British supremacy in Bengal.

Sirkar, both merchants of Calcutta, to Mr. Drake :—"That your petitioners having supplied the Buxeyconnah with rice and gunnies when the Nawab marched on the place in 1756 confide in your goodness to be paid the amount of what they sent in to the factory at the desire and orders of the Zemindar, as they are informed all other merchants and Doocandars (shop-keepers) have been paid by your orders."—*Proceedings*, 17th November, 1757.

[32] These *gomastas* were all actuated by selfish considerations of making money, and took advantage of this opportunity to confirm their hold on the commerce of the country.

[33] 'Govindram and Ragoomitra, Sooberam Bysak, Ally Boye, Rutto Sircar, Sookdeb Mullik, Nian Mullik, Diaram Bose, Nilmony, Hurrikissen Tagore, Durgaram Datta, Ramsantose, Mahmud Suddock, Ayer Noody.'—*Consultations*, 18th September, 1758 A.D.

[34] 'Chaithon Das, Dulob Lucky, Cannant Nurry, Churn Bysack, Curoy Bissas, Gones Bose, Ramdev

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advanced the supremacy of the English East India Company in Bengal.[35]

Mitra, Sookdev Mitra, Ruthorn Loltta, Hutty Raon, Rajaram Palit, Durgaram Bedasonga, Durgaram Surmat, Lilmoni Chaudree,' and others.—*Ibid.*

[35] *Kṛṣṇacandracarita* by Rajivalocana, p. 98.

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CHAPTER II

SECTION I.—ENGLISH FACTORIES AND INVESTMENTS

General Features.

All the European Companies had established their factories in different parts of Bengal, especially in the important manufacturing and commercial centres.[1] The French had factories at Chandernagore, Dacca, Cassimbazar, Balasore, Jugdea, Rangpur, while they had "Houses of trade and other Agencies" at Supur (in the Birbhum district), Khirpay, Canicola, Mohunpur (in the Midnapur district), Serampur, Chittagong, Maldah, etc., which were regarded as "Subordinates to the said original Factories."[1a] We know from Gaṅgārāma, a contemporary Bengali writer, that the Dutch had factories in such interior villages as Kāgrāma (in the Murshidabad district) and Mowgrāma (in the Burdwan district).[1b] The more important

Factories in different parts of Bengal: important factories of the English Company.

[1] *Revolution in Bengal*, Hill's *Bengal*, Vol. III, p. 216.

[1a] *Rangpur District Records*, Vol. V, p. 120.

[1b] *Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa*. While touring through certain districts of Western Bengal, I saw remains of old European factories in different villages.

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factories of the English Company were situated in the following places :—Patna, Cassimbazar, Rangpur, Rampur Bauliah, Lakshipur, Kumarkhali,[2] Santipur, Burran,[3] Sonamukhi,[4] Radhanagore, Khirpay, Haripal, Golagore, Jangipur, Surdah,[5] Judgea, Dacca, Collinda,[6] Balasore, Balaramgurhy, Maldah, Baranagore, Dhaniakhali, Buddal,[7] Harrial.[8] Besides these, there were subordinate factories and *aurungs* in many places, *e. g.*, at Surul near Bolpur [9] and Elambazar [10] near Suri in the Birbhum district and Ganutia in the Murshidabad district.

These factories were profitably utilised by the Company in collecting investments. The Company's goods were usually sorted, prized and embalmed in the *cotah* of the *aurungs* in the following manner :[11]

" So soon as the merchants bring their cloth

2 Kumarkhali is near Kushtia in the Nadia district.

3 In the Nadia district.

4 Sonamukhi is in the Bankura district, now a centre of shellac industry.

5 Surdah is in the Rajshahi district, the old residency building there being occupied by the Police Training School.

6 *Rennel's Journals*, p. 75.

7 In the territory of the Raja of Santosh.

8 In the Rajshahi district.

9 *Bengal: Past and Present*, Vol. XXV, p. 85.

10 Holwell, *I. H. E.*, p. 202.

11 Letter from C. Manningham and William Frankland to the President and Council in Calcutta, dated the 17th of December, 1752.

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into the warehouse the whole is examined by the sorters and sorted into the different letters peculiar to the species of cloth and in this manner every merchant's cloth is prepared for the prizing, and divided into such a number of tokes or parcels having the merchant's name affixed thereto who provided the same. When the goods are thus prepared three pieces from every separate parcel and from every letter of each sortment of goods are promiscuously drawn by the young gentlemen who are assistants in the warehouse, which three pieces are carefully examined by the warehouse keeper and his assistant and the middle pieces of the three in point of goodness is then fixed upon by the warehouse keeper and the merchant who provided the cloth as the piece by which the goods are to be prized by the Governor and Council, and on the goodness and defect of the middle piece so chosen depends the price of the goods to the merchant. In this manner each middle piece of each sortment is drawn and fixed upon as the price by which the said parcel is to be prized by the Governor and Council in the prizing day when they are compared and examined with the muster (sample) contracted upon and prized by the Governor and Council according to their equalling or falling short of such musters. After this the cloth is embalmed, the method having been to pack every merchant's cloth that is prized at one piece in the same bale."

How the Company's goods were sorted, prized and embalmed.

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This method had certain defects. We find that a bale was "composed of cloth belonging to several merchants which have been provided by their separate *gomastas* (or agents) at different *aurungs* and sorted in the warehouse by different hands ; by which method though each separate parcel of cloth is never so well sorted in regard to itself, yet the fabrick of every *aurung* having its peculiar qualities, will not permit of their being packed in one and the same bale without an inequality appearing. Some *aurungs* being noted for the fineness of their thread in which case the cloth though fine will appear thin, whereas the cloth from a different *aurung* of a coarser thread by being struck closer and equal may in all probability be a superior piece of cloth, as every piece of cloth of the same fabrick and breadth, though provided at different *aurungs*, ought to be composed of an equal number of threads. Another material reason why the pieces should not wholly determine the manner of packing arises from the uncertainty of the pieces themselves, for according to the method before set forth of chusing the prize pieces by drawing three promiscuously from each parcel, it may happen that a superior parcel of cloth, as there will always remain in each letter several degrees of goodness, though not sufficient to alter the letter, will be lower prized than another parcel rather inferior by the chance of drawing the prize pieces. For instance

Defects of the Method.

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let three pieces be drawn from two different parcels of cloth, we will suppose the parcels equal in number though not in goodness, yet if by chance of drawing from the first parcel one of the three pieces prove of the first degree and the other two of the lowest, the middle piece will of consequence be but an inferior piece, and the parcel be prized accordingly ; yet if from the inferior parcel the pieces drawn should prove two of the first degree and one of the lowest, the middle piece will prove (to be the) superior piece of the parcel (which may in general only equal the inferior of the former parcel) and be prized at the same price, on which account these two parcels will be packed together and a great inequality arise in one and the same bale, it being impossible to preserve one standard in so great a variety of cloths though of the same fabricks, provided at different *aurungs* and sorted here by variety of hands." [12] In the year 1751 the merchants of the English Company complained that the Export-Warehouse-keeper had been very strict that year in sorting *gurrahs* and *soot* (cotton) *romals* (handkerchiefs). They added that "in every letter there was a Best, Middle and Worst Piece and that it was always customary to prize upon the Middle piece but now the sorters distinguish those three pieces as three different Letters which occasions the loss," [13] and

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] Letter to Court, 2nd January, 1752, para. 39.

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they, therefore, requested the Council in Calcutta to "order Every Letter to be sorted in three different parcels and at the end to put them together for one prizing which would prevent the Lower Letters being run into the higher and distinguish those who brought in the best goods."[14] The Council complied with this but enquired of the merchants the reasons for their bringing the cloths so late as 15th November though they had received the advances early in the season.[15] The merchants replied that "on account of the strictness in sorting of the *gurrahs* and *soot romalls* they should lose from 20 to 25 p.c. for which reason they wrote to the *Dellols* (*dalals*) to whom they advance *Dadney* to deduct the like amount out of the cloth and have received for answer they will not send them any more of those kind of Goods on those terms."[16] The members of the Council regarded this delay on the part of the merchants to be proceeding from their designs to deprive the Company of sufficient time for sorting the cloths[17] and told them plainly that "all cloth brought in after the 21st January (1752) should be cut in Prizing" and that they would give suitable encouragement to those "who brought in their cloth before that time and show a proper resentment to those who did not."[18]

14 *Ibid.*
15 *Ibid*, para. 41.
16 *Ibid.*
17 *Ibid*, para. 43.
18 *Ibid.*

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Taylor has given a description as to how cloths were dressed and packed in the Dacca factory for transmission to England [19]:—"After the cloths are bleached they are delivered in a neat state to *nurdeeahs, contadars,* who count and dry the cloths. The '*Chicon*' ('art needle work,'—embroidery) and '*Kusheeda*' fabrics, and all thick assortments, as well as cloths, rendered tender from repairs, are dried on the ground, and all the rest on bamboo rails, to which they are secured by strings. The cloths, after having been dried, are examined by a '*Serbaracar,*' with respect to their colour and state of dryness and are then wound by the *nurdeeahs* upon their rollers. They are covered with *baftas* and carried in the evening to the factory where they undergo another examination next morning. Fine and thin cloths are first given to *nurdeeahs* to be turpayed, and then to *rasugars* (darners), if they are to be gold-headed or flowered. They are next unrolled and examined on tables at the factory, and if necessary are sent to the *dagh-dhobees* [20] to have spots and stains removed, and lastly to *rasugars* to have damages repaired. They are next folded, and then distributed among the *koondegurs* [21] to be bettled

19 Taylor, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Cotton Manufacture at Dacca*, pp. 98-99.

20 "Dagh-dhobees are washermen, who remove spots and stains from Muslins."

21 *Koondegurs* were "workmen who bettle cloths."

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with chank shells or the mallet, or sent to be ironed. The last examination of them being finished, they are exposed to the sun where they remain till three in the afternoon, when they are made up in loose bales, and sent to the warehouses. Here they remain till the time of sorting them for despatch. After this sorting the cloths are put into open bales. From three to five pieces are drawn from each letter of every bale, and being compared by the Resident or his assistants, with the musters and approved of, the cloths are embalmed, screened, marked, and rendered ready for despatch. A despatch generally consists of eight or ten thousand pieces."

Meaning of investment.

The factories at first procured goods through *dalals* (brokers) who entered into contracts to bring the goods within a fixed date. These *dalals* received *dadni* or advance money from the agents of the factories to the amount of half or three fourths of the estimated value of the cloths in order to be able to make necessary advances to the weavers.[22] Such advances were also made to the merchants and manufacturers. Thus by advancing money to the *dalals*, merchants and manufacturers, the "Company were invested with a

Muslins "were beaten with smooth chank shells, cloths of a stout texture with a mallet upon a block of tamarind wood, rice water being sprinkled over them during the operation."

22 Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

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prior right to the goods for which they contracted, and hence their purchase in India acquired the name of investment."[23] By the year 1752 the *dalals* had much influence in trade circles ; they used to hold nightly meetings in Calcutta to arrange the prices they should charge from the English for piecegoods.[23a] They had a regular 'Trade Union' and though they were employed by the Company for commercial facilities, yet they, sometimes, felt no scruple in hindering the Company's trade by charging exorbitant commissions ; as for example, in 1754 the *dalals* at Jugdea charged on the Company 15 p.c. beyond the price of the goods.[23b] But they gradually lost their influence, as the Company began more and more to deal directly with the manufacturers than through them. In their letter of March 3, 1758, the Court of Directors wrote to the Council in Calcutta : "We would have you as much as possible cause the investments to be carried on at the subordinates upon the same place as that at Calcutta without the intervention of merchants, dallals, or brokers by whom the Company have so severely suffered."

The merchants could not always make good their contracts by procuring goods to the full amount of the *dadni* money, and the Court of

[23] Grant, *History of the East India Company*, p. 67.

[23a] *Consultations*, September 25, 1752 A.D.

[23b] They maintained that it was customary for them to receive such *dustories*.—*Consultations*, May 6, 1754 A.D.

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Directors (about the year 1746) sent instructions to the members of the Council in Calcutta that they should advance *dadni* as little as possible to the merchants and should encourage them to purchase goods at ready money. On 29th October, 1746, the Council in Calcutta directed the gentlemen at the Jugdea Factory "to keep strictly..... (the) orders of the Home in not advancing money for goods but to pay for them as they were brought into the house."[24] On 13th March, 1747, the Seths and all the merchants were acquainted with the Council's resolution to contract on the new terms according to the orders of the Court of Directors. But the merchants replied on 19th March that "they could not pretend to provide goods on the Terms proposed. There being but few articles on which they were to receive but little Dadny and the rest were to be provided for Ready money."[25] They also pointed out that under that arrangement it would not be possible for the Company to get cloths for investment, for there were many articles which brought no gains but sometimes caused losses even when full *dadni* had been advanced upon them, particularly the coarse cloths. They further asserted that if they found

Merchants not to advance *dadni* but to purchase goods for ready money.

Objections of the merchants.

24 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 21.

25 Letter to Court, January 1748, para. 32.

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any goods at the *aurungs* too costly to yield any profit, then they would never purchase them for ready money, and thus the Company itself would be disappointed. Moreover, they apprehended that if the Nawab's government came to know that they had changed their method of providing goods and that they furnished goods with their own money, then the Nawab's officers would "certainly make a handle thereof to fleece them and will put a stop to their bringing in goods till their demands were satisfied, as they lately served the Dutch at Cassimbazar, whose custom was always to wind off the silk in their Factory and having provided a small part on Dadney last year, the Government put a stop to all their Business till they had paid a sum of money for this new method of acting."[26] The Council pointed out that for some years past they had provided some fine goods for ready money, of which the Government had taken no notice, to which the merchants replied that "what they had provided without Dadney was but a small part in proportion to the Dadney Goods and that they had kept it very private among themselves, from whence it might have escaped the Government's notice."[27] The merchants were then told that the Company expected them to comply with the orders of the Court of Directors, and they were asked

[26] *Ibid.* [27] *Ibid.*

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to inform the Council as to what goods they could provide for ready money and for what sortments it was necessary to advance *dadni*. They were also requested to "exert themselves in providing the full quantity of coarse goods as well as fine agreeable to the List of Investment," as the Company required a large tonnage for that year, there being no hope of any assistance from Madras, which had fallen under French influence.[28]

The merchants expressed their inability to act according to the proposals of the Company and replied on 9th April "that the times are such from the great scarcity of Money and apprehensions of impediments from the Morattoes (Marathas) the most they could think of undertaking for Ready Money was one fourth part of the Investment and unless they received Dadney for the other Three Fourths, they could not promise to complete the investment and that they could not possibly undertake more than Fifty-thousand pieces of Gurrahs besides the last year's Ballance of that Article."[29] Thus, finding it difficult to have contracts for the expected quantity of ready money goods and *gurrahs*, the Council thought that "the most likely way to procure a quantity of *Gurrahs* and goods for ready money was to set aside all the Cossajura (goods manufactured at Kasijora in the Midnapur district) Goods which would amount to

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid*, para. 34.

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about Four Lacks and a half more of the finest sortments of Goods" which, in the opinion of the Council, the merchants "could provide for ready money." It also considered " that the person who contracted for the Cossajurah Goods should deliver in one piece of that sortment and for the other sortments of ready money Goods they should deliver in one piece of *Gurrahs* for every two pieces of those fine sortments." It offered 30 p.c. *dadni* on all the other sortments of goods and asked the merchants to undertake 75,000 pieces of *gurrahs* on *dadni*. But on 13th of the same month the merchants declared their inability to comply with these proposals unless they received sufficient quantity of *dadni*. The Council waited till 25th May, 1747, when the merchants, who had been asked to give their final answer about the terms on which they could carry on the investments, replied that they could contract on no other terms than the following :— "That they would provide 50,000 pieces of *Gurrahs* upon Dadney. That one-fourth part of the investment including all the Cossajura goods, they would provide for ready money, the rest on Dadney on which Eighty-five per cent. to be advanced as last year, that is sixty per cent. first and 25 per cent. afterwards and that they could not undertake it upon any other terms."[30] So, on 28th May the Company decided to try with other merchants.

Terms offered by the merchants not accepted by the Company.

30. *Ibid*, para. 36.

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Agreement with other merchants.

On 8th June, Omichand proposed to undertake one-third of the Company's investment "in equal proportion for ready money to be paid him as the goods were prized and at the same price agreed for with other merchants and a third of 50,000 pieces of *Gurrahs* besides which to deliver in a piece of Gurrahs for every piece of Cossajura Goods and to have interest allowed him on this last sortment from the 1st January till paid for and on all the other goods from the 1st July, requiring also to be excused the Deduction as. 12-6 p. for Brokerage."[31] In spite of the strong opposition of Mr. Jackson, the proposals of Omichand excepting that "the Brokerage should not be excused him" were accepted by the majority of the Council on 10th June. On 13th June, sixteen merchants, of whom seven were new men, proposed to undertake a part of the investment to the amount of 7,70,000 rupees on the following terms :—"to be advanced 50 per cent. *Dadney*.....and Interest to be allowed thereon till paid, from the time of signing the contract and 35 per cent. more to be paid them when their Goods were prized and interest to be allowed thereon from the 1st of October, that one-third of what they should provide to be for ready money of which the Cossajura Goods to be a part and for every piece of

Their terms.

[31] *Ibid*, para. 38.

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Cossajura Goods to deliver in one piece of Gurrahs, on which Gurrahs Dadney as before mentioned was to be advanced them."[32] On 16th June the Council unanimously approved of those proposals and agreed to employ those merchants on their giving securities.[33] The Seths and other merchants then appeared and wanted to contract for the remaining two-thirds of the investment "on condition of having 50 per cent. paid them within the month of August and the remaining 35 p.c. to be paid them on delivering in Goods to the Amount of the 50 per cent. but the Cossajurah Goods they desired to be Dadney in case they were not so far favoured that they would then provide the Cossajurah Goods for Ready money that for every piece of Cossajurah Goods they would give one piece of Gurrahs, but those Gurrahs to be Dadney, the Cossajurah cloth and Gurahs to be made a separate head of but if there are any new men introduced into the Dadney, they would do no business at all."[34] But on 18th June the majority of the Council refused to contract with them.

On the same day '*musters*' (samples) being brought in by other merchants with whom the Council had decided to contract, the Council proposed to them to lower the prices of several '*musters*.' But the merchants replied that it was impossible to do so "as the price of cotton was so

[32] *Ibid*, para. 39. [33] *Ibid*, para. 40. [34] *Ibid*.

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high, workmen so scarce and times so bad and that some Articles must be raised as they could not perform them, *viz.*, *Gurrahs*, *Soosies* and *Chucklaes*. The two latter articles being silken goods and the price of silk being so extravagantly raised they would be excessive thin and the fabric spoiled unless there be an advance allowed them."[35] The Council complied with the merchants' demand of 82 rupees per corge of '*gurrahs*' of $36/2\frac{1}{4}$ and agreed to advance them Re. 1-8-0 per piece on the fine *soosies* of $\frac{50}{1\cdot5/8}$ and 40/2 and on the *muster* of ordinary *soosies* of 40/2 an advance of Re. 1-6-0 per piece, and Re. 1-12-0 on the *muster* of *chucklaes*. All the other sortments of goods were fixed on the same prices as in the last year. On 6th July those merchants, whom the Council had decided to employ, gave security for each other in three sets,[36] while on 13th July, eight of the old merchants expressed repentance for their obstinacy and proposed to undertake part of the investment to the amount of Rs. 3,60,000 on the same terms as agreed to by the new merchants, recently engaged by the Council. The Council accepted their proposals.

Their securities.

[35] *Ibid*, para. 41.

[36] *Ibid*, para. 43.

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Instructions of the Council to the Jugdea, Balasore and Cassimbazar factories.

About the beginning of March 1747, the Council repeated its orders of the previous year to the Jugdea Factory to "provide goods for ready money expressly forbidding them the advancing any on Dadney."[37] But the *dalals* there expressed their inability to transact business "in any other method than has been practised two years before, which has been by advancing money small sums" and petitioned that "this method may be continued otherwise they should be compelled to seek some other protection."[38] On 21st March the Council directed Mr. Heath, Chief of the Balasore Factory, "to provide as many goods as possible without advancing Dadney."[39] On 22nd May, the Cassimbazar factory was also ordered "to proceed in providing the silk Piece-goods and as many Gurrahs as they possibly could on the best terms advancing no more Dadney than was absolutely necessary for the provision of their Goods."[40] The Council sometimes agreed to give *dadni* if the merchants furnished strong securities.[41]

Strict control of the Company over the merchants.

The Company always tried to maintain a strict control over its merchants, who had to give securities and were

37 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 55.

38 *Ibid*, para. 58. 39 *Ibid*, para. 162.

40 *Ibid*, para. 183.

41 Letter to Court, 4th January, 1754, para. 62.

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also often warned against sending cloths of inferior quality.[42] In 1741 the gentlemen at the Dacca Factory took '*mutchulkas*' (written bonds) from the *russagars* (darners) "to be answerable for any damage from the cloth being torn or split."[43] The Company often exacted penalties from the merchants on the balance of silk and silk piecegoods if they failed to make good their contracts in time; in cases when the merchants themselves could not or did not pay the penalties their securities were held responsible for their debts.[44] Sometimes, on failure of contracts, the merchants were put in confinement.[45] The Company also insisted on settling the accounts of its merchants in its factories and did not like that others should arbitrate in these affairs.[46]

Effective control of the Council in Calcutta over the Chiefs and the subordinate officers of the factories.

The Chiefs and the subordinate officers of the factories were also under the effective control of the Council in Calcutta. The members of the Council regularly inspected the goods sent by the different factories; they sometimes demanded explanations from the factory Chiefs when the articles sent by them were of bad

42 Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, para. 86; *Ibid*, dated 10th January, 1748, para. 201.

43 Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, para. 114.

44 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 15.

45 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 43.

46 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 250.

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quality and even returned these to them[47] with strong orders and instructions for improving in future the quality of investments.[48] While inspecting on 12th November, 1753, the goods sent by the Dacca Factory on 10th October, 1753, the members of the Council in Calcutta found that these " were very illsorted (and that there was) too great a difference from outside folds to the inside ones. The *Baftas* (a kind of calico) in particular were very badlyd ressed, the inside Folds very thin and the Fabricks very bad." The Dacca factors were then asked not to procure those cloths, unless they could remedy the said defects. The members of the Council also noted that " the flowered work in general was worked with too coarse a thread, the flowers very indifferently worked and the inside one extremely bad. The *Tanjeebs* and *Terrendams* have a greater difference than usual between the inside and outside Folds and the coarse threads were not well packed out."[49] They, therefore, directed the gentlemen at the Dacca factory " to be more careful in the Provision of their Investment for the future, and that the complaints of the flowered goods should be obviated, particularly that of working the flowers with a coarse thread." The Company's servants, who received employments in the

[47] Letter to Court, 4th January, 1754, para. 71.

[48] Letter to Court, 7th December, 1754, p. 71.

[49] Letter to Court, 4th January, 1754, para. 93.

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factories, were required to submit securities. On 8th March, 1746, the Council in Calcutta considered the orders of the Court of Directors in relation to taking security from the servants and decided that the "Chiefs of Cassimbazar, Patna, Dacca, should give security in the sum of fifty thousand rupees each, the Chief of Jugdea and Ballasore Thirty thousand rupees each and each of the Council at subordinates sixteen thousand rupees and the writers eight thousand rupees each."[50]

The Chiefs and the subordinate officers of the factories allowed to engage in private trade, — employment of Indan menials and sepoys in the factories.

The Chiefs of the factories and their assistants, drawing small salaries, were allowed to engage in private trade and to enjoy its profits.[51] The factories employed Indian menials for minor offices concerning the investments and sepoys for guarding the factories and escorting the goods from the *aurungs* to the factories and thence to Calcutta.[52] On 29th July, 1747, the Council in Calcutta "ordered that no Black servant employed by the Company should be employed in any private person's service at subordinates. List of Banians, Gomasthas to be sent and all merchants and Assamys[52a] accounts to be Ballanced yearly and

50 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 122.

51 Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88. 52 *Ibid.*

52a "A cultivator, a tenant, a renter, a non-proprietary cultivator ; also a dependant ; also a debtor, a culprit, a criminal, a defendant in suit."—*Wilson's Glossary*, p. 35.

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signed by the merchants."[53] It is interesting to note that female labour was employed by the Company in flowering and embroidery works on cloths.[54]

We find instances of new *aurungs* being started in order to meet the high demands of the Court of Directors for *gurrahs* (*e.g.*, 90,000 pieces for the year 1753). In the year 1754, the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory found it greatly difficult to provide any large quantity of *gurrahs* from the existing *aurungs* and so the Council permitted them in the month of June to establish new *aurungs* at Imambazar (or Elambazar in the Birbhum district), Nonoor (Nannur), Moortally and Cowgram (Kagram).[55] The Council decided in the month of July to direct the *gomastas* to go on providing goods according to previous orders, sent *gomastas* to the newly

Establishment of new *aurangs*—their withdrawal in future.

[53] Letter to Court, 4th February, 1746, para. 18.

[54] Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, para. 105. Women, as I have already noted in the section on "The Position of Women," produced much of the yarn required for cloth manufacture in Bengal Thus the hands of women greatly helped this important industry of their country. Up to the time of the Great War (when the Turkish market was lost to Dacca) the employment of women in embroidery and flowering work (*e.g.*, chiefly Kashida work) was very common.

[55] Letter to Court, 9th September, 1754, para. 27.

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established *gurrah aurungs* and asked the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar Factory to "endeavour if possible to prevail with the merchants to reduce that part of their contracts."[56] But owing to the reduction of the Court of Directors' orders for *gurrahs* to 35,000 pieces in the year 1755, the Council recalled the *gomastas* from the three new *aurungs* except from that at Elambazar where it expected to get 200 maunds of lac.[57]

Method of procuring investments changed since 1754—

From 1754 onward the method of procuring investments was changed. The Council in Calcutta began since then the practice of getting goods directly from the *aurungs* instead of only depending on the country merchants and the chief factories. The Maldah *gomastas* received orders for 45,800 pieces of cloths for the year 1754 but the Council apprehended that they would not be able to provide these in time because they could not begin their purchases before 11th August, their chief *gomasta* being detained till then in Calcutta for the settlement of accounts.[58] So far as Santipur and Burran were concerned the Council expected to get from those two places in time all the goods ordered, that is, 12,000 pieces of different sortments of cloths at the

Maldah.

Santipur and Burran.

[56] *Ibid*, para. 28.

[57] Letter to Court, 8th December, 1755, para. 45.

[58] Letter to Court, 9th September, 1754, para. 44.

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former and 20,000 pieces from the latter.[59] The *gomastas* at Haripal had invested for 6,250 pieces

Haripal.

but they hoped to procure nothing more than 3,000 pieces for the ships of that season, because scarcity of provisions had reduced the inhabitants to the state of poverty and they were, therefore, "afraid to make large advances of *Putney*[59a] (that being) the method of purchasing most of their goods."[60] The Baranagore *aurung* was directed to provide 12,900

Baranagore.

pieces of different sortments; the *gomastas* there began to procure these since 2nd May and were able to purchase 4,816 pieces (for *dadni*) and 4,000 pieces for ready money by 17th November.[61] In Calcutta 20,700 pieces were to be provided, and of these the Council got 1,400 pieces by the end of the year and hoped to get all in time.[62] The Dooneacally (Dhaniakhali)

Dhaniakhali.

aurung also hoped to complete its investment for 7,750 pieces within the season.[63] As at the Golagore *aurung* the method of buying cloths was by 'advancing *Putney*,' the *gomastas* there could purchase

59 *Ibid*, paras. 45 and 46.

59a Putney or "act of ordering goods from a manufacturer." Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

60 Letter to Court, 9th September, 1754, para. 47.

61 *Ibid*, para. 48.

62 *Ibid*, para. 49.

63 *Ibid*, para. 51.

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only 7,343 pieces by 5th November and did not hope to procure more than 5,000 pieces within the season though they were required to provide 17,000 pieces.[64] Though the *gomastas* at the Buddal *aurung* had began to procure investments so late as 13th July, yet they assured the Council in Calcutta that they would be able to purchase all the 12,200 pieces for which they had received orders.[65] The Council did not expect more than 21,000 pieces, out of 33,100 ordered, from the *aurung* at Harial as the *gomastas* there could not begin their purchases before 10th September, the chief *gomasta* being detained in Calcutta for a long time for the settlement and readjustment of the accounts of that *aurung*, and also because of the "prodigious rise of waters thereabout which overflowed the country and occasioned so great a scarcity of provisions which made the gomasthas cautious how they advanced the weavers any Puttun—the method of doing their business there."[66] The Council in Calcutta at first asked the *gomastas* at the Sonamukhi *aurung* to invest 2,900 pieces of silk and '*tossary*' (*tasar*, an inferior sort of silk) goods and 20,000 pieces of *gurrahs*, but directed them afterwards to "lessen

Buddal.

Harial.

Sonamukhi.

64 *Ibid*, para. 52.
65 *Ibid*, para. 53.
66 *Ibid*, para. 54.

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their purchase of *gurrahs*" [1] as the Court of Directors had reduced the quantity of that article in their list of investments for that year.[67] The *gomastas*, however, replied that they had received the Council's orders so late that they would be compelled to purchase 12,000 or 13,000 pieces of *gurrahs*.[68]

In that year the Company made the following advances to the different *aurungs*:—Maldah (Rs. 1,75,164-4-0), Buddal (Rs. 30,362-1-3), Harial (Rs. 1,90,143-15-0), Khirpai (Rs. 1,99,374-15-3), Santipur (Rs. 1,09,538-9-0), Burran (Rs. 1,14,110-0-0), Cuttrah or Rennel's Chatterah near Serampur (Rs. 43,208-15-0), Baranagore (Rs. 50,776-1-6), Enumbazar or Elambazar (Rs. 4,33,400-0-0). It received from those places goods of the value of Rs. 3,41,991-6-0 by the end of that year and hoped to get goods for the remainder before the Company's ships left Bengal.[69]

Opinion of the Court of Directors on the new method of investments.

The Court of Directors sent their sentiments about the new method of carrying investments and also some instructions for future guidance in their letter to the Council in Calcutta, dated 31st January, 1755:—"As the sale of our Bengal goods is now ended, we find it necessary to confirm to you the several remarks

67 *Ibid*, para. 55.
68 *Ibid.*
69 *Ibid.*

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made in the course of our list of investments on the several species of goods bought on the new plan at the Aurungs compared with the same kinds bought off or contracted for with the merchants. The sales of which have answered even beyond our expectation in favour of the former, and was in no kinds more remarkable than in the Orua Cossea, and Mulmuls and Doreas Cossajura ; the common sort of the two last kinds purchased at the Aurungs, sold from twenty to thirty per cent. higher than what are invoiced as fine bought of the merchants per Durrington and Flamouth at much higher prices. The Mulmuls Santipore in general are neither amended in quality or reduced in price in proportion to most other sorts purchased at the Aurungs. But thanks to the conduct of these merchants which have drove you to expedients which might not otherways have been thought of, you now find many sorts of goods are fabricated within our bounds, cheap and of good qualities, and may be had at the first hand as it is evidently for our bounds but likewise to draw as many others as possible from all countries to reside under our protection, we shall depend upon your utmost efforts to accomplish the same and shall hope the time is not far off wherein we shall find a great share of your investment made under your own eyes. The utmost attention must always be paid to the conduct of our servants at the subordinates through whose hands so great a proportion of

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our estate passes. The annual remarks we have made in our lists of investment, together with what appears upon the face of your letters and consultations, especially those received last season, show the necessity of it. At Cassimbazar our servants have so remarkably fallen off, in that once valuable article of raw silk, not to mention others that we cannot suppress the suspicion that must naturally arise against their management. Our servants at Dacca likewise who for a considerable time gave us great satisfaction, have of late done quite the reverse, and we have as much reason to complain of our people at Jugdea.

To be careful about the conduct of the servants at the factories.

We therefore hereby direct that immediately upon the receipt of this a supervising committee be formed which is to be composed of the President for the time being, Mr. Charles Manningham, Mr. Richard Becher, and, Mr. John Zepheniah Holwell, and in case of the death or absence of any of the before-mentioned persons the President is to fill up the said Committee to the number of four with such other members of the Council as he shall judge best qualified for such an important trust. This committee is to enquire into the manner of making the investments and the management in general at the subordinate settlements, they are likewise to enquire into the

—a supervising Committee to be formed.

to look after the subordinate factories.

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particular conduct of our servants employed there for some time past, now, and in future, and whether they have or do make any unjust advantages, and what in the management of the investment or in any other branches of their employes, and they are to consider of and point out such regulation as they shall think necessary, and the said Committee is empowered to send for such books and papers and examine all such persons, whether blacks or whites, as they shall judge can give any information in the matters before them, and they are to report the facts with their opinion upon the whole to the Council Board from time to time. The Board is then to take into consideration the said reports and determine thereupon impartially and according to the best of their judgments, always remembering to do the utmost in their power to recover what the Company are defrauded of. And you are further directed to enter all such reports, together with your proceedings thereupon at large, in your diary for our information. As the entrusting the conduct and management of our affairs at the subordinates to people of experience is of the highest concernment to the Company, it must be observed by you for the future as a standing rule or order, that our set of servants at Cassimbazar do consist of two of your Council and one senior merchant at least, besides junior servants ; at Dacca, of one of your Council, a senior merchant and junior servants,

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and that one of the best qualified servants next below your Council be always appointed chief of Jugdea, Luckipore or wherever else the Jugdea settlement shall be moved to."

Formation of a Committee.

In conformity with the orders of the Court of Directors, a committee consisting of four members, the President, Mr. Manningham, Mr. Becher, and Mr. Frankland, was constituted for managing the *aurungs*.[70] The Council in Calcutta decided unanimously on 10th March, 1755, that the method of making purchases at the *aurungs* themselves should be continued.[71] Considering that the goods could be available early in the season at cheaper rates than in the months when the agents of the other European Companies would begin their purchases, the Council directed the Export-Warehousekeeper to write to the *gomastas* at the *aurungs* to continue buying without waiting till their accounts for the last year were adjusted, which, as the Council thought, could not be settled before August or September, 1755.[72]

—purchase of goods at the *aurungs* continued.

The following quantity of cloths was purchased

[70] Letter to Court, 8th December, 1755, para. 52.

[71] Letter to Court, 11th September, 1755, para. 18.

[72] *Ibid.*

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Quantity of goods purchased at the different *aurungs* till the end of August, 1755—

at the different *aurungs* by the end of August, 1755 :—

Santipur up to the	18th of August	5,249
Keerpoy (Khirpai, 7 miles east of Chandrakona in the Midnapur district)	13th of August	5,902
Burron	18th Do.	8,767
Harrypaul (Haripal)	27th Do.	2,663
Doneacolly (Dhaniakhali about 20 miles W. N. W. of Hugli)	13th Do.	1,974
Harryal (Harial)	13th of July	10,825
Buddal	11th Do.	3,454
Maldah	21st of August	22,910
Cuttrah	26th Do.	3,367
Baranagore	13th Do.	3,709
Gollagore	2nd Do.	2,905
Sonamukhi	2nd Do.	414
Calcutta	31st of July	3,580

The Maldah *gomasta* was informed by the Council in Calcutta on 20th July that in the list of investments received per 'Rhode' the proportion of cloth to be provided at the Maldah *aurung* was 46,800 pieces, that is, 500 pieces more than the orders of the previous season. By the 14th of October, 19,977 pieces were purchased and these, together with 9,598 pieces on account of last year's balance remaining there, amounted to 29,590 pieces, out of which 15,006 pieces arrived in Calcutta by the 8th of December, 1755, and 7,982 pieces were then on the way. The *gomasta* further hoped

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to send 10 or 12 hundred pieces more to Calcutta before the ships for that season were sent home. But the Council in Calcutta did not expect to send in season to England the whole quantity of cloth ordered at the Maldah *aurung* because it took one month to wash and dress all the brown cloths at that *aurung* and also because the cloths purchased after November could not come in time for it took 45 or 50 days to bring cloth bales from Maldah to Calcutta.[73] The *aurung* at Buddal was required to provide in that season 14,000 pieces more than 18,000 pieces of last year and the *gomasta* there procured by 19th October, 8,865 pieces out of which 4,832 pieces reached Calcutta by 8th December, 1755, and 1,224 pieces were then on the way. The *gomasta* further informed the Council in Calcutta that he would send 4,000 pieces more in November or December and that he hoped to provide 3,000 or 4,000 pieces more. But the Council did not expect to receive the pieces purchased after November in proper time, before the ships carrying that season's investments left Calcutta, for reasons similar to those concerning the Maldah cloths.[74] The *gomasta* of the *aurung* at Harial was informed by the Council on 19th July that the said *aurung* had been ordered to provide 28,100 pieces ; up to 14th October, 19,515 pieces were collected there

[73] Letter to Court, 8th December, 1755 A.D., paras. 29 and 30.

[74] *Ibid*, para. 31.

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out of which 6,455 pieces reached Calcutta by 8th December, 1755, and another parcel was then on the way. The orders for *addaties* and *cossaes* were not completed as these could not be procured without an advance of *patni* which the *gomasta* was obliged to "give out very sparingly from the poverty of most of the weavers considerably increased this season by an Inundation in that part of the country causing a very great scarcity and dearness of provisions, etc."[75] The *gomasta* there further hoped to procure of the different sortments 7,000 or 8,000 pieces more than what had been purchased up to the 14th of October but the Council thought that the cloths bought after November could not reach Calcutta in time for being sent to England for reasons similar to those assigned with regard to Maldah and Baddaul.[76] With regard to the *aurung* at Doneacolley (Dhaniakhali) the Council expected to get all the 7,500 pieces ordered except *allibanies*, which were prepared only by a few weavers. It was apprehended that "extraordinary dearness of the cotton yarn and Herba silk (would) somewhat enhance Price of Goods provided at Doneacolley this season."[77] About the *aurung* at Khirpai it was expected by the Council

[75] *Ibid*, para. 32.
[76] *Ibid*.
[77] *Ibid*, para. 33.

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that all the 15,100 pieces of white cloths ordered would be procured, as the *gomasta* there had purchased 9,840 pieces up to 29th October out of which 5,165 pieces reached Calcutta by 8th December.[78] At that *aurung*, the goods were to be purchased with ready money except 3,000 pieces for which '*Putton*' (*patni*) was to be advanced. The Council apprehended that the goods at that *aurung* would be somewhat dearer in that season " by reason of the large purchases made there by the Danes, Prussians, Portuguese, etc., who have raised the Markets at an adjacent *aurung* called Patna." [79] In the *aurung* near Calcutta 202,700 had been ordered in 1754 and 23,600 pieces were added for the year 1755, out of which 9,695 pieces were made ready by 26th November, 1755, and the Council expected to get 16,000 pieces more before sending the ships to England. That *aurung* provided coloured cloths but as the price of indigo, which could be formerly purchased at 7 or 8 rupees per maund, had then gone up to 22 rupees per maund, the Council apprehended that the dyes would be worse than usual. Investments were procured there at high prices and with great difficulty because of the " dearness of cotton yarn, etc., materials and provisions." [80] [81] The *aurung* at

[78] *Ibid*, para. 34.
[79] *Ibid.*
[80] *Ibid*, para. 35.
[81] *Ibid*, para. 36.

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Cuttrah was ordered to provide 13,000 pieces out of which 6,293 pieces became ready and the Council got 5,093 pieces by 26th October. The *gomasta* there thought that he could provide 5,000 or 6,000 pieces more, but that *aurung* suffered great "disadvantages in regard to the price of Indigo, etc., material and other provisions." [81a] The *gomasta* of the *aurung* at Gollagore was asked by the Council to purchase 13,000 pieces of cloths, which was 4,000 pieces less than the previous year's orders, and not to provide *soot romals*, which had been very dear during the previous year. He could purchase 6,127 pieces by 7th November and expected to procure 4,000 or 5,000 pieces more. That was "a *Putton aurung*" which manufactured coloured cloths but there were there at that time "the same complaints against the Exchange of Indigo, Materials, and Provision as at Cuttrah and Calcutta." [82] The *aurung* at Baranagore received orders for 14,600 pieces which exceeded those of the previous year by 1,700 pieces. The *gomasta* there procured 7,407 pieces by 14th October of which 6,240 pieces were sent to Calcutta, and he expected to purchase 5,000 or 6,000 pieces more within the season. That was also a "*Putton aurung*" and had similar troubles as in the above-mentioned three

[81a] *Ibid.*

[82] *Ibid*, para. 37.

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aurungs.[83] The *aurung* at Santipur was ordered to procure 12,500 pieces of cloths and 80 maunds of fine cotton yarn; 8,284 pieces became ready at that *aurung* by 9th November and 5,296 pieces reached Calcutta with 15 maunds of fine yarn. The *gomastas* there expected to provide 2,000 or 3,000 pieces more, but the Council in Calcutta apprehended that the orders would not be fully complied with as cotton was " so very dear and difficult to be obtained."[84] The *aurung* at Haripal received orders for 133,500 pieces, of which 5,163 pieces could be purchased by 2nd November and 1,644 pieces reached Calcutta. The *gomasta* there expected to provide 5,000 or 6,000 pieces more within the season, but that " being a *Putton aurung*, the poverty of the weavers there " had compelled the *gomasta* to be very careful in advancing money, and the Council therefore apprehended that the orders for that *aurung* would not be completely satisfied.[85] The *gomasta* at Burron was expected to comply with the orders for 20,000 pieces, as he had been able to procure 14,108 pieces by 29th October.[86] The *aurung* at Sonamukhi had received orders in 1754 for 2,900 pieces of silk goods, 200 maunds of lac and 20,000 pieces of *gurrahs*, but in the year 1755

83 *Ibid*, para. 38.

84 *Ibid*, para. 39.

85 *Ibid*, para. 40.

86 *Ibid*, para. 41.

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these were reduced to 2,500 pieces of silk goods and 600 maunds of lac.[87]

As the *gomastas* had begun the purchase of investments for 1755 since the month February, 1755, the Council in Calcutta at first expected that all the orders would be duly satisfied. But, as we have already seen, the prices of provisions, indigo and other materials remained very high till the month of November, "when (only) the prospect of a plentiful crop of rich harvest reduced the value of Grain."[88]

Quarrels with Nawab Sirajuddowla and distress of the Company.

With the beginning of quarrels with Sirajuddowla, the Company's investments for the years 1756 and 1757 suffered greatly. The Cassimbazar factory being stormed, the Company's *gomastas* of that part had to stop their work in the different *aurungs*. Holwell wrote to the Court of Directors on 30th November, 1756:—"On Cassimbuzar being invested, we wrote to the several subordinates and to all our gosmastas at the several aurungs, advising them of the Subah's proceedings, and to be upon their guard and hold themselves in readiness to retreat with the Company's effects etc. and on intelligence of the capture of the place and the Suba's march to Calcutta, we sent them orders to withdraw and join us with all expedition. But these orders were too late, excepting your factory at Luckypore, as I have already intimated in my letter of the

[87] *Ibid.* [88] *Ibid.*

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17th July. Mr. Boddam, your chief at Ballasore, received our orders in time to withdraw himself, the few soldiers he had there and about 6,000 rupees of your effects; the remainder, to the amount of about 40,000, remain yet sequestered, and your factory house in part only demolished at Ballasore, but Bulramgurry, by its situation, having escaped the Government's notice and by the prudent conduct of Mr. John Bristow (left resident at Ballasore by Mr. Boddam) is still retained. Myself and Mr. Boddam were dispatched to take a formal possession of it the 18th September, and to negotiate other matters, which will be transmitted on the face of our Fulta Consultations; and we have thought it necessary to nominate Bulramgurry your Presidency, being divested of every other possession you had in those provinces.'' [89] But we find in Proceedings, dated 9th February, 1757, that Messrs. Boddam and Playdell were compelled to leave Bulramgurry when it had been surrounded by Raja Ram Singh with a party of 2,500 men.[90]

Troubles of the gentlemen at the Dacca Factory.

The gentlemen at the Dacca factory were reduced to straits when it was captured by Jasarat Khan, Naib of Dacca, towards the end of

[89] Hill, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 52; Letter from the Council in Calcutta to the Court of Directors, *ibid*, pp. 166-93.

[90] Long, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

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June 1756, under the orders of Sirajuddowla, and they had to solicit the help of the gentlemen of the French factory there. The following document gives a graphic picture of their condition :—" This morning Monsr. Fleurin the French Second came to our factory to acquaint us that he had been with Dusseraut Khan (Jasarat Khan), our Nabob, endevouring to procure us the most favourable terms he could, but all that he was able to obtain was, that the factory should be delivered up directly, the soldiers lay down their arms, and be carried prisoners to the Nabob, the Ladies go out in Palankeens (palanquins) to the French Factory, the Palankeens not to be searched on Mons. Fleurin's giving his word that nothing should be in them but the cloths the ladies had on. As to the chief, etc. Company's servants Nabob demanded that they should first be brought to him and afterwards go to the French Factory, Monsr. Courtin giving his Parole to the Nabob that we shall await the orders of Seer Raja Dowlat in regard to our future fate. Taking these proposals into consideration, we think them very hard. But as Monsr. Fleurin assures us that very little alteration can be expected. Agreed that we beg Monsr. Fleurin to endevour to save us the disgrace of going to the Durbar and obtain permission that we go directly to the French, also that the soldiers may not be illused. This he promises to endevour to obtain and to return in the afternoon. The

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28th June in the afternoon Monsr. Fleurin returned and acquainted us he had obtained permission for the Gentlemen to go to the French Factory without going to the Durbar and that the Nabob had promised the soldiers should not be ill-used or put in irons. We then gave our Paroles to the French chief, gave our Military prisoners to the Nabob's people, and are now with sorrowful hearts leaving our Factory being permitted to carry off nothing but the cloths upon our Backs, having still this satistaction left, that we have to our utmost discharged our duty to our Hon'ble Employers.'' [91] The Dacca factory was not restored to the English until the following year.

Increased influence of the Company after the battle of Plassey.

But after the battle of Plassey and the consequent change of government in Bengal, the Company found itself free to provide its investments. The Council in Calcutta then sent the *gomastas* with money to the different *aurungs* directing them to "provide the cloth of their respective Aurungs on the most reasonable terms they can procure them taking particular care not to debase their quality.'' [92] Due to the increased

[91] Consultations at Dacca, the 28th June, 1756, at six in the evening, Bengal and Madras Papers (I. R. D.), Vol. II.

[92] Letter from the Council in Calcutta to the Court of Directors, dated 20th August, 1757, Bengal and Madras Papers, Vol. II.

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influence of the Company after the battle of Plassey, the impediments which had so long disturbed the Company's investments almost disappeared but the servants and the *gomastas* of the Company began henceforth to employ force and oppressions on the weavers and the native merchants. Many private European traders also followed suit. It appears in the Bengal Secret Consultations, dated 30th April, 1764, that a European agent named Mr. George Ivie insulted Mr. Jeykill, the English chief at the Rungpur factory, that the Zamindar of Shahpur received much ill usuage from a *gomasta* of Mr. Pollock's (another agent) and that the country people laboured under "numberless oppressions" from the "unlawful proceedings of many private European agents and their gomasthas settled in the Rungpore and Dinagepoor countries and of whom repeated complaints have been made to the chief (of the Cassimbazar factory) by the Naib at Murshidabad." Certain occasional disturbances were now more easily overcome by the Company.

Interruptions to the E. I. Co.'s investments due to general disorder of the time.

During the period under review, the East India Company's investments were occasionally interrupted by various factors, most of which had their origin in the general disorders and lack of governance of the time. When the province itself was being tormented by troubles from within and invasions and ravages from

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outside, its traders could hardly expect a smooth and easy way of commerce. The Maratha invasions appeared as a terrible scourge and calamity on the country, and I have pointed out in other chapters how they affected the different aspects of the economic life of the people. It may be also noted here that their influence was felt on the Company's investments and trade. The president of the Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on 3rd February, 1743: "Are greatly concerned, Investment falls short this season, and some goods not so good as usual by Dearness of Provisions, excessive price of cotton and Troubles by Morattas."[93] Not to speak of the interior parts of the country, even in Calcutta, the Council experienced much trouble in procuring goods and it wrote to the Court of Directors: "Fear Great Difficultys in providing goods at Calcutta from the Damages done in the country by the Late troubles."[94] The Council in Calcutta tried to keep information about "every Material Motion of either party (the party of the Nawab or of the Marathas)" in order to guide the subordinate factories properly, and these factories were ordered to send goods whenever danger subsided.[95] From copious references in the records of

(a) The Maratha invasions.

93 Para. 67 (I.R.D.).

94 *Ibid*, para. 18.

95 Letter to Court, 8th January, 1742, para. 81.

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the time,[96] we find that the troubles due to the Maratha invasions continued fully till the conclusion of a peace between the Nawab and the Marathas in the year 1751 ; and even after that the general economic decline caused by these invasions affected the Company's investments.[97]

In May 1742 the Marathas entered Murshidabad and plundered the house of Jagat Seth and others, which "put a stop to all business, the Merchants and weavers flying wherever they come."[97a] The invasion of February 1743 was also "attended with all the unhappy consequences of the Last, their rout much the same, nothing but towns were actually burnt. The Nabob's troops also plundered greatly so that the people Deserted the Aurungs where Gurrahs are made, and an entire stop was put to business for some time at Calcutta, Cussimbuzar and Patna."[97b] The Company suffered much loss in its '*dadni*' money advanced to the merchants, because the latter could neither pay anything in exchange nor

96 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, paras 8, 9, 11;
Letter to Court, 4th February, 1746;
Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746;
Letter to Court, 28th February, 1748.

97 Letter to Court, 9th September, 1754.

97a Letter to Court, dated 31st July, 1742, para. 10.

97b Letter to Court, dated 13th August, 1743, para. 10.

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could return the money.[97c] In June 1745, the Marathas renewed their ravages with vigour which occasioned great confusion and prevented the progress of the Company's business at several *aurungs*.[97d] This time they entered (probably from the direction of Bundelkhand) through Bihar (*viâ* Patna), plundered Futwah and pillaged 4,200 pieces of cloth belonging to the English Company; they also burnt a godown wherein 7,168 maunds of saltpetre had been deposited. Thus, in that season, the Company could not get any supply of saltpetre from Patna.[97e] The advance of the Marathas up to Katwah and their encampment near the *gurrah aurungs* prevented the Company from providing *gurrahs* in sufficient quantity.[97f] The chief of the Cassimbazar factory wrote to the Council in Calcutta on 17th February, 1746, that "the Marattoes still continuing near them makes it impossible to send the bales down with safety."[97g]

97c Letter to Court, dated 3rd February, 1743, para. 69.

97d Letter to Court, dated 11th August, 1745, para. 9.

97e Letter to Court, dated 31st January, 1746, paras. 111-14.

97f Letter to Court, dated 4th February, 1746, para. 16. "Am sorry cannot send the quantity of Gurrahs ordered, Morattoes situation on the Island of Cossimbuzar preventing all Intercourse and no goods received since these people have been there."—Letter to Court, dated 22nd February, 1746, para. 13.

97g Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 92.

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The Company's Resident at Balasore also wrote to the Council on 25th January, 1747, that the encampment of Mir Habib (a friend of the Marathas) at a distance of two miles from Balasore with 8,000 horse and 20,000 foot soldiers had put an entire stop to the Company's investments at that factory because "all the workmen had run away and the washermen were taken up to labour for Meerhabib so that a great deal of cloth lies ready at the weaver's house and cannot be dressed."[97h] In 1748 a large body of the Marathas tried to approach Dacca by way of the Sunderbunds and had advanced right up to Sundra Col (Sundra Khal).[97i] They plundered the goods of the Dacca Factory then in charge of Ensign English. The conduct of Ensign English, for his failure to defend the goods entrusted to his care, was greatly stigmatised by the Council in a letter to the chief of the Cassimbazar Factory; he was subsequently imprisoned, tried by a court-martial and cashiered.[97j] The eastern part of Bengal remained, of course, comparatively free from these invasions but there the incursions of the Mugs

97h *Ibid*, para. 110.

97i Perhaps one of the creeks with which the Sunderbunds abounded. [Among the contemporary native writers, Muhammad Wafa refers to the attempt of the Marathas to advance towards Dacca.—Waq'i Fath Bangala, fs. 21-22.]

97j Consultations, March 1748.

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from Arracan and Chittagong proved to be a terrible impediment in the path of the Company's investments.[98]

The Company made some attempts to obtain a redress for their losses caused by the plunderings of the Marathas ; but all their attempts ended in smoke. According to the request of the Calcutta authorities, Mr. Wake, the President of the Council at Bombay, sent a messenger to Sahu Raja with a prayer for redeeming the aforesaid losses of the Company in Bengal, but the messenger returned "without any written answer from him (Sahu Raja)" and "his trifling excuses" extinguished all hopes of redress.[98a]

(b) The Afghan rebellions.

Political disturbances and upheavals within a country invariably affect its economic condition. We find that owing to the advance of Mansur Ali Khan, the Subahdar of Oudh, into Bihar in 1743 the Company's investments for that year from the Patna Factory fell short.[99] Similarly, the rebellions of Nawab Allahvardi's Afghan generals like Mustafa Khan, Shamshir Khan and Sardar Khan and the consequent disorders and confusion within

[98] Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, paras. 106 and 135; Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747; Letter to Court, 27th January, 1749, para. 10.

[98a] Consultations, November 1748; Letter to Court, 27th January, 1749; *ibid*, 10th August, 1749.

[99] Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, paras. 57 and 58.

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Bihar added to the troubles of the Company's servants at Patna, as for example, Sahmshir Khan "demanded a General tax from the 3 European Factorys (The English, the Dutch and the French) of 40 or 50 thousand rupees." [100] A contemporary Muslim writer, Muhammad Wafa, who has given a vivid description of the ravages and atrocities committed by the Afghan rebels, has remarked that "they plundered every shop and bazar and took away whatever they could find in cash or kind." [101] As a matter of fact, for some time, they kept the whole city trembling. The contemporary Bihar historian, Gulam Husain, has also remarked that "during all this time the city was a prey to all the horrors of sack and plunder." [102] One can well imagine how these turmoils hampered the collection of investments by the Company.

(c) Exactions of the Nawab.

These disturbances subjected the Company to the payment of contributions to the Nawab's government. Nawab Allahvardi was in general impartial towards the European traders,[103] but under the pressure of the

[100] Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 56; Consultations, June 1748.

[101] Waqa'i Fath Bangala, fs. 50-52. (This is a contemporary Persian Manuscript preserved in the Oriental Public Library, Patna, and also in the State Library of His Highness the Nawab of Rampur.)

[102] Seir, Vol. II, p. 40.

[103] For details reference may be made to the chapter on.' East India Company's Trade.'

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troubles in his kingdom he was compelled to demand money from the East India Company with the argument that those who enjoyed benefits from the country must also share in its defence. Occasional interferences in the affairs of the Company's factories by the officers of the Nawab's government, scattered through different parts of the country, sometimes affected their business.[104] The Nawab, however, tried to redress their grievances when complaints were made to him. Similarly, minor internal disputes proved to be an impediment before the Company's merchants in the matter of procuring articles for investment. When on the 12th of August, 1751, the Council in Calcutta asked the merchants if they could provide Amorra (?) goods, the latter replied that "the Rajah of that place was dead, his brothers quarreling about the succession and their mother endeavouring to put the government into the hands of a third person, they could not think of venturing to send their money thither to provide Goods being afraid during these troubles their Gomasthas would be plundered."[105]

(*d*) Conduct of the Nawab's officers.

(*e*) Minor internal disputes.

104 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, paras. 82-84; *Ibid*, dated 2nd January, 1752, para. 50; Long's Selections, p. 93.

105 Letter to Court, 20th August, 1751, para. 54.

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(f) Dearness of provisions and high prices of articles.

These political disturbances and also occasional inundations[106] caused dearness of provisions and high prices of cotton, indigo and other materials which considerably affected the Company's investments, as their merchants, *dalals* and *gomastas* being thereby exposed to straitened circumstances sometimes failed to make good their contracts duly and also often demanded high prices and ready money for purchasing goods. During the years 1742-43 the business of the Balasore factory suffered for dearness of provisions.[107] On the 28th of October, 1752, the gentlemen at the Jugdea factory tried to explain the defect in their investment by informing the Council of the "very extraordinary rise of cotton there that the value of their *baftaes* was increased about 20 per cent. beyond their general price, since which cotton has had no fall and rise which was then as usual at near two maunds for a rupee has rose to 25 seers, so that the manufacture of a piece of Jugdea cloth from two annas has rose to five annas. That these inconveniences occasion rise in their *baftaes* in the whole of above 25 per cent. and as notwithstanding they have their cloth at its old price so the defect in quality will appear they hope as little as ought to be expected."[108] The Dacca factory also

106 Letter to Court, 8th December, 1755, para. 32.

107 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 65.

108 Consultations, dated 13th November, 1752.

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complained at that time of high price of cotton.[109] From several references [110] in contemporary records we find that this state of things continued all throughout the period.

(g) Currency troubles and scarcity of money.

The acute currency disorders of the time very often put obstacles in the path of the Company's investments. For their investments in Bengal the Company at that time imported bullion from home which was exchanged here with coins.[110a] But the Company had to work under disadvantages caused by the multiplicity of coins, which did not always pass for the same value and were liable to varying rates of batta or discount. The Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on 8th January, 1742:—"New coined siccas not fluctuating in Trade, shroffs attempted to Raise the Batta so resolved they should pass at no more than 15½ old siccas at 10, Madras rupees at 10, and Arcot of Weight at 8 Per Cent. Batta to reduce

[109] Letter from Mr. Nicholas Clerimbault, Chief of the Dacca Factory, to the Council in Calcutta, dated 14th September, 1752 (I.R.D.).

[110] Letter to Court, 8th December. 1755, paras. 28, 32, 33, 35.

[110a] In a contemporary tract entitled '*Thoughts on the Present State of Our Trade to India*,' by a merchant of London, 1754 (preserved in the Imperial Library, Calcutta), we find a protest against the export of bullion from England to India.

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them into current rupees of Calcutta.'' [111] The Council again wrote on 3rd February, 1743 :— " No vent for silver at Calcutta though Marathas withdrawn Mint shut up so Cossimbazar sold all the bullion at Sicca rupees 203 per 240 sicca weight.'' [112] The repeated invasions of the Marathas also occasioned a great scarcity of money. The bank of Jagat Seth alone was robbed of a huge amount, sums of realised rents were sometimes plundered by them on the way of their being carried to the Nawab's treasury, the important market places were, once and again, deprived of their cash and stock [113] and the ordinary people had to protect their lives by paying money to the Maratha soldiers. Gaṅgārāma writes :—'Again and again they (the Marathas) demanded money of the people and poured water into the noses of some who failed to supply them with it, drowned others in the tank and instantly put many of them to death.' [114] We cannot ignore Gaṅgārāma's statement as a piece of poetic exaggeration, because it is well corroborated by the author of Ryaz-us-salatin, who writes :—" These murderous freebooters drowned in the river a large number of the people, after cutting off their ears,

111 Para. 173.

112 Para. 46.

113 Muhammad Wafa, *op. cit.*; Holwell, I. H. E., p. 195.

114 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 350-56.

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noses, and hands. Tying sacks of dirt to the mouths of others they mangled and burnt them with indescribable tortures.'' [115] The Nawab had to buy off Balaji Rao's alliance by paying him a large amount and he had to maintain his own troops in order, by presents of money and various other gifts.[116] To meet these demands he took recourse to some extraordinary methods of raising money. The Zamindar of Rajshahi had to render him a substantial financial help ; Raja Rāmanātha of Dinajpur was heavily pressed for money when he had gone to Murshidabad, and he could only escape by giving a bill for twelve lacs of rupees in the name of Jagat Seth; and Mahārājā Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā had to pay twelve lacs [117] for which he was harassed. The scarcity of money thus caused by big cash payments out of the country, was further increased by the fact that the shroffs and wealthy people had ''transported their money across the Great River for fear of the Marattoes.'' [118] The President of the Council in Calcutta was, hence, obliged to write to the English gentlemen at Fort St. George on the 5th of May, 1746,

115 P. 344. Compare :—

''Bargite luṭila kata kata bā sujana ।
nānāmate rājāra prajāra gela dhana ॥ ''
Bhāratacandra's Works.

116 Holwell, *op. cit*, p. 133.

117 Bhāratacandra's Works; Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita.

118 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 33: Muhammad Wafa, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

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for sending down to Calcutta all the money that had arrived for them, and "as much more as they could spare from their necessary occasions." In response to this the Madras authorities sent to Calcutta per 'the Phazel Salam' on 30th June, 1746, ten chests of rupees amounting to Rs. 86,000 and a box of gold mohurs containing 432 pieces.[119] The President and Council at Bombay were also addressed [120] on 13th May, 1746, for sending down to Calcutta whatever they could spare and they accordingly despatched some quantity of bullion. Further, the Company had to borrow money occasionally for its investments from the house of Jagat Seth [121] at high rates of interest. There are also instances when its business came to a standstill for want of money.[122]

(*h*) Bad conduct of the Company's servants and exactions of the Nawab's Customs officers.

The bad conduct of the Company's servants sometimes created troubles in the matter of collecting investments. We shall find later on instances of this in the conduct of Mr. Russel at the Cassimbazar factory and of Mr. Cole at the Patna factory. The Nawab's officers at the *chowkies* (toll-houses) sometimes stopped

119 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 33.

120 *Ibid*, para. 51.

121 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, paras. 68, 71, 72, 73, 76, 191, 193, 194, 196, 197, 198.

122 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, paras. 72-73.

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the bales of the Company, which could be recovered by paying extra duties.[123] The customs officers very often exacted more than the usual dues. This is clear from the following list[123a] of *dustories*[123b] taken at the several *ghats*[123c] belonging to the 'Putchelrah' (?) :—

Places.	What was agreed to be taken. Rs.	A.	What was actually taken. Rs.	A.
Aurungabad (in the Mursidabad district, 31 miles S.E. of Rajmahal).	4	0	6	0
Burragoreah (Geriah near Rajmahal in the Santhal Parganas).	1	0	10	0
Godagari (on the Padma River in Rajshahi District).	2	0	7	0
Moorchah (Rennel's Murcha on the Cassimbazar-Rampur-Boalia Road).	3	0	7	0

[123] *Ibid*, para. 50.

[123a] Letter to Court, dated 21st February, 1756.

[123b] "A fee, a perquisite, a commission, specially a fee claimed by cashiers and servants on articles purchased, or on payments made."—Wilson's Glossary, p. 129.

[123c] "A landing place, steps on the bank of a river, a quay, a wharf where customs are commonly levied."—*Ibid*, p. 175.

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Places	What was agreed to be taken		What was actually taken.	
	Rs	A.	Rs,	A.
Jellengy (Jellinghee) (situated at the point where the river Jellinghee parts from the Padma—distance E. from Berhampore 25 miles, N. from Calcutta 105).	3	10	14	0
Butsolah.	3	6	14	0
Seberampore.	2	0	13	0
Lullydangah.	1	0	8	0
Buxypore. (There is one Buxipur in the Nadia District 30 miles north of Krṣṇanagar and another in the District of Jessore 56 miles N. W. of Jessore).	1	0	7	0
Bowley.	0	8	7	0
Turmohanny (perhaps refers to Tinmohani near Dhulian in the Murshidabad District).	0	8	6	0
Surdah (in the Rajshahi District).	2	0	10	0
Nazerpore (in the Maldah District).	1	0	7	0
Custeah (Kustiah).	0	8	5	0
Aukdunk.	0	8	3	0
	23	0	114	0

"The chowkeys planted up and down the country" made the members of the Council in

Calcutta repeat their "complaints to the (Nawab's) Durbar of their impositions and exactions." [123d] At length the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory "obtained an ample Perwannah both from the Great (Allahvardi) and Chuta Nabobs (probably refer to deputy-Governors) directed to all Subahs, Rajas, Zamindars forbidding them on pain of their highest displeasure to molest or detain any conveyances with the English Dustucks on any pretence whatever." [123e] This perwanah was "so strongly worded" that the Company was "in great hopes that it will prevent any interruptions or Exactions from those chowkeys in time to come." [123f]

But Mr. Watts, chief of the Cassimbazar factory, wrote to Messrs. R. Drake and C. Manningham on 21st December, 1755, "stating that the extortions practised at the chaukis cannot be stopped unless a present is given to the (Nawab's) Prime Minister Hakim Beg and explaining why such a present will be of advantage to the Company's trade." [123g] They replied to him on 7th December, 1755, "enquiring whether it is possible to have the alterations suggested by them made

123d Letter to Court, dated 8th December, 1755, para. 96.

123e *Ibid.*

123f *Ibid.*

123g Quoted in Letter to Court, dated 21st February, 1756.

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in the dastak for free trade to the Company which will have to be obtained from Hakim Beg and whether it could be ascertained that the present to be given for obtaining the dastak was not to be regarded as precedent."[123h] Mr. Watts replied on 6th January, 1756, "stating the discussion he had concerning the alteration proposed by the latter in the dastak mentioned above, and intimating that the present given for obtaining it cannot become a precedent" but he noted at the same time that "little reliance can be placed on the assurances of Hakim Beg."[123i]

We find that the Nawab took the following step for removing the complaints of the Company :—"Dustuck to all Rahdars,[123j] Guzarbans,[123k] Chowkeydars, izardars,[123l] etc., and to all the Golls,[123m] Guzars,[123n] within our districts as far as the pechowbrah(?) of Muxadavad (Murshidabad)

123h Quoted in *ibid.*

123i *Ibid.*

123j "A collector of tolls or transit duties."

123k "An officer appointed to take tolls both on the high roads and at ferries."

123l "A farmer of any item of public revenue, whether from land, customs, or any other sources; the renter of a village or estate at a stipulated rate."—Wilson's Glossary, p. 214.

123m Gola—"A grain or salt store or market; a place where it is sold wholesale."—*Ibid*, p. 18.

123n "A ferry station for boat, a place of transit or toll."—*Ibid*, p. 192.

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extends, be it known that agreeable to the complaint made by the Gomasthas of the English Company the Nabob granted them a perwannah for all the Ghats (ferries) in the Soubaship of Bengal that contrary to their ancient customs no new Imposition be laid on their Goods by the Rahadary's, etc. Because they have a Phirmaund from the King as also Senauds of former Subahs exempting them from such impositions. For this reason I wrote that my Pachowlerah(?) Ghat do not take more than what is now settled as particularized below; Take care they have no further cause of complaint, in this affair be punctual and observant :—

	Rs.	A.
Aurungabad	4	0
Barrah Gurreah	1	0
Godah Gurry	2	0
Jellengy	3	10
Butsallah	0	6
Sebarampore	2	0
Lullydangah	1	0
Buxypore	1	0
Ballu Bubrampore	0	8
Turmohaunny	2	0
Nazarpore (Nazirpur)	1	0
Custeah	0	8
Aukdunk	0	8"

(i) Competition of European and Asiatic traders.

We need not think that the Dutch were the only European rivals of the English Company in the field of Bengal commerce till the middle

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of the 18th century. But till then it had to reckon with the competition of the other European traders like the French, the Portuguese, the Prussians, and the Danes as well as of Asiatic traders like the Armenians, the Mughals, the Pathans, etc. These merchants sent their own *gomastas* to the *aurungs*, and the latter enhanced the prices of most of the sortments of cloths and other articles, which created troubles for the men of the English factories and hindered the collection of investments in various ways.[124]

[124] Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, paras. 106 and 135 ; *ibid*, dated 3rd August, 1744, paras. 14, 15, 16; *ibid*, dated 20th August, 1751, para. 46. Consultations, 25th September, 1752; Letter to Court, 8th December, 1755, paras. 28 and 34.

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Section II.—Investments from Year to Year till the beginning of quarrels with Sirajuddowla.

After thus noting the general features of the English East India Company's factories and investments, we proceed to study certain available facts about the investments from year to year. At the beginning of 1741 the Council in Calcutta sent the lists of investments for that year to all the subordinate factories, along with which the

1741.

Cassimbazar factory received 67 chests of bullion, the Dacca factory 1,60,000 rupees, the Jugdea factory 60,000 Arcot rupees and the Balasore factory 24,000 Madras rupees.[125] The Council also thought of taking security from the merchants, as had been suggested by the gentlemen of the Cassimbazar factory, and ordered that the merchants should be threatened against sending cloths of inferior quality.[126] The merchants protested against this and eight of them combined together, for which the Company wanted to punish them. But after

[125] Letter to Court, 19th February, 1741, paras. 17 and 18.

[126] *Ibid*, dated 11th December, 1741, para. 86.

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considering that the French and the Dutch had purchased silk at a higher rate, the English Company stopped inflicting any punishment on them. On 27th July all the subordinate factories and the merchants in Calcutta were ordered by the Company "to hasten goods down."[127] The merchants of Calcutta promised to pay 2,000 bales of cloths by the 20th of November; the Cassimbazar factory promised to send the bales as early as possible; the Dacca factory sent a list of goods that had been prized; the Patna factory had 30,000 maunds of saltpetre and 262 bales of cloths ready; the Balasore factory promised to send the investments as soon as possible and the Jugdea factory promised to complete its investments in December.[128]

1742 and 1743.

In 1742 the authorities in Calcutta sent as usual lists of investments to all the subordinate factories in the month of January, with money for the same purpose, Dacca receiving 1,60,000 rupees, Jugdea 24,000 rupees, Balasore 24,000 rupees.[129] But in that year the Company's investment suffered greatly on account of the first Maratha invasion[130] and currency troubles. In the next year also (1743) the Company suffered in the matter of collecting investments mainly owing to the

127 *Ibid*, para. 120.

128 *Ibid*, para. 121.

129 *Ibid*, dated 15th February, 1742, paras. 13 and 15.

130 *Vide ante*.

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reappearance of the Marathas.[131] "On the first Appearance of an accommodation" between the Marathas and the Nawab, the Company "set about the investment but Excused the Merchants from any Penalty on Goods not to be had through troubles who represented cotton and provisions being Dear several articles must be advanced in price." [132] Thus the contract with the merchants was finished on 5th May at advanced prices for some sortments.[133] The Company contracted on a worse "Muster (sample) than old ones for Cossajura (Kasijora) Mulmuls 6,000 at Rupees 13-6-0 (each), 2,000 at 24, and 500 at 26-8-0, Doreas (Dure, chequered) Cossajura 2,500 at 21." [134] As bullion could not be sold at a proper rate, the Company was also obliged to borrow large sums of money for carrying on investments.[135]

The Calcutta merchants being called for investments on the 2nd of April, 1744, complained of their last year's losses due to dearness of cotton and provisions. As that state of things continued even then, they "advanced the Prices very considerably but made Abatements and contracted 20th April—

1744.

131 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, paras. 8 and 9.

132 *Ibid*, para. 11.

133 *Ibid.*

134 *Ibid*, para. 12.

135 *Ibid*, para. 22.

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Photaes (a king of piecegoods) so dear did not contract for them—*Dadney* was 70 per cent on which Penalty of 10 per cent on deficiencys occasioned by commotions." [136] The Calcutta Council drew up the list of investments for the year 1745 on 4th March, 1745, but the merchants objected to being security for each other in three sets; on 18th March the Company 'agreed to their being security in six sets.' [137] On 12th March, the Company had informed the merchants that it expected large abatements on several species for which they had received advances last year as the price of cotton had greatly fallen and the French carried on little business. But the merchants alleged that they "were great sufferers by Malda Goods, Troubles and Extortions of Government ruined numbers of weavers, provisions excessive dear, so rather expected an advance." [138] Finding all arguments useless, the Company ordered on 28th March a list of such articles to be drawn out as the merchants could contract for at the 'A' and medium price, and agreed with them for 600,000 of *gurrahs* at 72 per cent. exclusive of what they brought in for balance on contract for the year 1742 [139] at the price then current.

1745.

136 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 8.

137 *Ibid*, dated 11th August, 1745, para. 4.

138 *Ibid*, para. 5.

139 *Ibid*.

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But owing to the reappearance of the Marathas in Bengal during the month of June 1745 and their encampment near the *gurrah aurungs*, the Company could not get with all its efforts *gurrahs* contracted for the year 1742 and could get only 12,152 pieces out of the 60,000 contracted for the year 1745.[140]

On 8th April, 1746, the merchants were ordered to attend the Council in Calcutta and were asked if they were ready to contract for as much as they thought they could procure. They were also informed that the Company expected lower prices than those of the last two years, as "the price of cotton was so much lowered and the French could not possibly provide any Goods." But they gave evasive answers, and told plainly on 15th April that "the times would not admit of any abatements and the circumstances of the country appearing to us much impoverished and not at all favourable for reducing the prices." The Council, therefore, ordered the list of such goods as the merchants could provide to be drawn out at the 'A' and medium prices of last year, and accordingly on 17th April such a list was laid before the Council with another of such goods as the merchants could not contract for. The Council then enquired of the merchants what quantity of *gurrahs* they could

1746.

140 *Ibid*, dated 4th February, 1746, para. 18.

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provide for that year's shipping. They replied that there was a balance of 47,940 pieces of *gurrahs* due from them on account of last year and 6,439 for the year 1742 which they were determined to deliver that year, but they expressed their unwillingness to make any fresh contracts for that year owing to the disturbed state of the country. After some arguments they were persuaded to contract for 25,000 pieces of 36 covids [141] and 5,000 pieces of 72 covids which were equal to 35,000 pieces of 36 covids at the same prices as in the last year, that is, Rs. 72 per corge (a mercantile term for a score) for 36 covid *gurrahs*. On 2nd May the merchants having agreed to provide the fine *cossajura* goods for ready money as they had done in the last year, the Council persuaded them with much difficulty "to make an abatement in the prices" [142] and also to make an additional contract for 150,0 0 pieces of *gurrahs* at the rate on which the other *gurrahs* had been contracted before. Thus the Company made a saving "in those fine goods of 12,025 rupees and procured an additional quantity of *gurrahs*." [143] The merchants could by

141 Name of a measure (resembling modern measurement by 'hāth') varying locally in value. According to Grose (1760) "the covid at Surat was 1 yard English, at Madras 1/2;" he says that "at Bengal it was the same as at Surat and Madras."—Hobson-Jobson, p. 207.

142 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 6.

143 *Ibid.*

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no means be engaged to undertake the contract for Balasore handkerchiefs of 17 yards and 14 nails, and they declared that they were "every year great losers by them but if procurable they will provide and bring them in." On 8th August, the Council in Calcutta considered the merchants' balances for the year 1745 and saw that "there was due to them exclusive of their Gurrah contracts Rs. 2,09,562-8-0 and on their contract for Gurrahs 1742 Rs. 16,149-12-9." When a reasonable explanation was demanded by the Company from the merchants for their keeping the money advanced for the purchase of *gurrahs* so long in their hands, they replied that the "*troubles in the country prevented with their compliance with their contracts in that article as the Marattoes were chiefly in that part of the country where the Gurrahs are provided.*" [144] They also added that if the Company thought it proper they were ready to pay the penalty at the rate of 10 p.c. for their failure to supply *gurrahs* according to contracts and that they would be glad to be relieved from the promise they had made for supplying the *gurrahs* 'on the last year's contracts,' as it was very difficult "to provide *gurrahs* for want of workmen and the excessive dearness of cotton." [145] From various considerations, the Council agreed to

[144] *Ibid*, para. 9.
[145] *Ibid*.

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"charge 5 p.c. on the Ballance of their (merchants') *Gurrah* contracts for the year 1745, in regard to the Ballance on *gurrahs* 1742 as they were contracted for at 51 rupees 8 annas per Corge and as the present year's contract was at 72 rupees per Corge." The Council considered it a sufficient punishment for the merchants and more for the interest of the Company to compel them to deliver in that year's balance at the price they had originally contracted for. It therefore ordered that the "sum of 7,117-8-6 being 5 per cent. on Rupees 1,42,350-12-6 be charged on the several merchants Accounts and being deducted from the sum of Rupees 2,09,562-8 that they should have Interest allowed them on the remainder from the 30th April last." [146] But as the merchants proved too obstinate to pay the penalty of 5 p.c., the Council referred the matter to the Court of Directors. In that year's investment the '*soosies*,' '*chucklaes*,' and all silk goods were worse than usual which the merchants attributed to the extraordinary dearness of silk. Coarse cotton goods in general and particularly the '*gurrahs*' were bad ; the *gurrahs* were very thin because the "country cotton of which they should be made being destroyed and the weavers were obliged to work up thread made of Surat

[146] *Ibid.*

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cotton which is too fine for the Fabrick and withal costs them very dear." [147]

1747. On the 13th of March, 1747, the Calcutta list of investments was drawn up and laid before the Council and the merchants appeared there on 16th March. The Seths were informed that the Court of Directors had written favourably about them and so they should "exert themselves to the utmost in providing goods for the ensuing seasons..... which would be most for their own interest, in order not only to retain but increase" the good opinion of the Court of Directors.[148] The merchants expressed their unwillingness to contract on the new plan ordered by the Court of Directors according to which *dadni* was to be advanced to the merchants as little as possible and goods were to be purchased at ready money.[149]

1748. On the 18th of February, 1748, Omichand delivered to the Council in Calcutta ready-money goods of the value of four lacs of rupees, and applied for some money as he had a large quantity of goods ready for prizing. The Council, thereupon, ordered the Committee of Treasury "to deliver him ten chests of Bullion at Two hundred

147 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 88.

148 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 32.

149 *Vide ante.*

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and one sicca rupees for 240 sicca weight."[150] On the next day the Company's merchants were offered bullion, in part payment of their due to them on their contracts for ready-money goods for the years 1745 and 1746, as Jagat Seth's house had refused to purchase it. The merchants expressed their willingness to accept to the amount of Rs. 2,12,451-14-0 in bullion whereupon the Council ordered the Committee of Treasury to deliver that amount to them at 201 sicca rupees for 240 sicca weight.[151] The merchants brought to Calcutta two new sortments of cloths, *viz.*, 45 pieces of *Cossaes Boulea* (*i.e.*, produced at Rampur Boalia) of 20-1 yds. and 25 pieces of *Cossaes Busna* (*i.e.*, produced at Bhusna in the Dacca District) of 40-2 covid, which were duly prized by the Council and sent to the Court of Directors for inspection.[152] On the 7th of March, the merchants who had contracted last year on *dadni* applied for further 15 p.c. in bullion, which was granted to them by the Council on their promising not to sell it under the price given by Jagat Seth's house.[153] On 4th April Omichand received 9 chests of bullion on account of ready-money goods delivered by him last year, and 5 chests of bullion were also delivered to other merchants for the year 1748.[154]

150 Letter to Court, 24th February, 1748, para. 94.
151 *Ibid*, para. 100. 152 *Ibid*, para. 101.
153 Letter to Court, 29th November, 1748, para. 29.
154 *Ibid*, para. 30.

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In the month of May 1748, the Company had only Rs. 2,50,000 in its Treasury in Catcutta for beginning the investments. After trying for about 15 or 20 days, the Council could persuade the merchants to contract on *dadni* and ready-money for about 30 lacs of rupees.[155] On 5th May they agreed to undertake the investments on the same terms as in 1743 and 1744, and on 9th of the same month they agreed to contract for some ready-money goods.[156] On 16th May, they offered to provide one-third of the investments for ready money and two-thirds on *dadni*. They wanted *dadni* especially on fine goods.[157] The Council agreed to Omichand's proposal to undertake a fifth part of the investment on the same terms as in the last year and also to the offers of one Gopinath Seth for Rs. 10,000 and of one Radhacharan Mitra for Rs. 50,000 on the same terms as proposed by Omichand.[158] The Council insisted on the merchants' lowering the prices of goods whereupon the latter agreed to lower 8 annas in one sortment and 6 annas in the other sortment of *soosies* and 8 annas in the *chucklaes*.[159]

On the arrival of 40 chests of treasure per 'Bombay Castle' the Company's merchants pressed

155 Letter to Court, 26th July, 1748, para. 3.
156 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 31.
157 *Ibid*, para. 32.
158 *Ibid*, para. 34.
159 *Ibid*, para. 36.

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the Council very much for advancing them 16 per cent. on their *dadni* contracts without which "they alleged they should be wholly unable to comply therewith, the cloth which they had provided at the Aurungs being stopped there on account of money they owe."[160] Omichand also requested the Council to pay him off the balance due to him since 1747 A.D. After various considerations, the Council at last agreed to advance Rs. 60,000 to the merchants and the same amount to Omichand also.[161] As the demands of the settlement had been running so high, at a time when there was great want of money, the Council directed the subordinate factories not to draw any bills of exchange on the Company and also to be sparing as far as possible in their expenses in every respect, particularly buildings and repairs. The Export-Warehouse-keeper informed the Council on 5th January, 1749, that the merchants could bring in, over and above their contracts, about 170 bales of different sortments of goods such as,

1749. *kapas* (cotton) *cossaes, santipuri malmals, cossajura malmals,* fine *cossajura malmals, nila* (blue) *soosies* and *terrandams*. Considering that the said cloths might be serviceable for the Company's tonnage, the Council agreed to accept these.[162] On 3rd

160 Letter to Court, 22nd December, 1748, para. 7.

161 *Ibid*, para. 9.

162 Letter to Court, 27th January, 1749, para. 15.

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March the Council took into consideration the disposal of the bullion and treasure then lying in the treasury and decided to pay 17 chests of bullion to Fatechand, 12 chests of rupees to the *dadni* merchants, 7 chests of bullion to those merchants who provided ready-money goods and six chests of bullion to Srikrishna and to reserve 5 chests of bullion for Cassimbazar, 5 chests for Dacca, and four chests of rupees for Jugdea. But Fatechand's *gomasta* refused to accept the bullion at previous rates and desired to have it by the weight of the sicca rupee. As this was the custom at Cassimbazar, the Council complied with his request.[163]

1750 and 1751.

On 18th March, 1751, the Council in Calcutta paid ten chests of bullion and 20,000 Bombay rupees to Omichand on account of the ready-money goods supplied by him in 1750 A.D.[164] When the merchants were asked by the Council about the terms on which they could contract for that year's investment, they replied that "they could not think of entering into the contracts until the accounts were adjusted."[165] They repeated the same answer on 1st, 11th, 18th and 22nd pril and they remained obstinate till 27th May when the Council could prevail upon them with great difficulty to sign their accounts.[166] But the Council

163 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749, para. 15.

164 Letter to Court, 20th August, 1751, para. 42.

165 *Ibid*, para. 44.

166 *Ibid*,

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resolved on 10th June "on no account to alter the old Musters to insist on their contracting for the Goods which they (the merchants) say they cannot provide as also for full quantity of Romalls (handkerchiefs) ordered on the same terms as last year" and to propose to them the lowering of prices on the following goods:—superfine *Cossajura malmals* of 40/2 to Rs. 27 per piece, fine *Cossajura malmals* of 40/2 to Rs. 22 per piece, *dooreas Cossajura* of 40/2 to Rs. 21-8 per piece, *Santipur malmals* of 40/2 to Rs. 17 per piece, *Balasore malmals* of 20/1 to Rs. 13 per piece, *soosies* of 50/1$\frac{12}{16}$ to Rs. 11 per piece, *Bustion cossaes* of 40/2 to Rs. 19 per piece, *Chaunpur Commercolly cossaes* of 40/2 to Rs. 6-8 per piece.[167] The merchants were also asked to contract for 4,000 pieces of *gurrahs* under a penalty of 15 per cent. on which the Council wanted to advance them 53 per cent. on the arrival of the Company's ships from home.[168] But they did not agree to those terms and on 17th June they expressed their unwillingness to contract on the old musters. However, the Council persuaded them with much difficulty to give up that point in consideration of which they wanted to have an advance price on the *'Addaties* fine gold heads, Rs. 2 per piece, ordinary *cārrādaries* 12 annas per piece, ordinary *chillaes* 12 annas per piece, *dooreas corricola* of 40/$\frac{2}{4}$ Rs. 2 per piece, the same of

167 *Ibid*, para. 45. 168 *Ibid*.

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40/2 Rs. 2 per piece, *Cogomaria cosseaes* of 40/2½ Re. 1-12 per piece, *Santipur malmals* of 40/2 Re. 1 per piece, *Cossajura malmals* of 40/2 Re. 1-12 per piece, fine *Cossajura malmals* of 40/3 Rs. 2-12 per piece.[169] They also informed the members of the Council that if they agreed to those terms, then they would lower the prices of superfine *Santipur malmals* and superfine *Cossajura malmals* by one rupee per piece less than what had been in last year's contract but that they "could not agree to any deduction from the other Goods as the French and Dutch by having made large contracts for them have enhanced their prices."[170] They further expressed their inability to provide the following goods though the Company advanced on the muster prices: handkerchiefs of 17½/⅞ *doreas*, chequered middling of 40/2, *Santipur malmals*, middling of 40/5, and also more than 4,000 pieces of *gurrahs*, as heavy downpour and high winds at the beginning of the year had almost destroyed the cotton crops and had raised the price of cotton. They also held that if the Council promised to pay them 50 per cent. on the

[169] *Ibid*, para. 46.

[170] *Ibid*. It is proved by certain records in *Correspondance du Conseil de Chandernagore avec divers, 2e partie* that the French were still then trying various measures for collecting investments from interior parts of Bengal (compare Letter from Chandernagore Council to M. Albert, agent of the French Company at Jugdea, dated 21st September, 1750).

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arrival of the Company's ships from home and 35 per cent. in October "then they would agree to pay the penalty on the Deficiency on the hundred but if the 35 per cent. was not paid them in October that then they would only agree to pay the penalty on the Deficiency on 85 p.c." [171]

The Council took those facts into consideration on 24th June and agreed to make the following advances to the merchants:—*addaties* 8 annas, *carradaries* 3 annas, *chillaes* 3 annas, *dooreas* 8 annas, *dooreas corricola* (of 40/2) 8 annas, *Santipur malmals* 8 annas, *Cossajura malmals* 7 annas, *Cossajura malmals* (of 40/3) 15 annas, *cossaes cogmaria* 7 annas, *chowtars* 6 annas.[172] On 27th June, the merchants proposed to contract for "One third Ready money and Two thirds Dadney to be allowed Interest on the former from the 1st July and interest on the 50 per cent. Dadney to commence from the 15th June and on the remaining 35 per cent. from the 1st October" to which the members of the Council replied that if they could not advance the 35 per cent in October then they would give them (the merchants) notes at interest. But the merchants did not agree to "pay the Deficiency in the hundred" unless they received the 35 per cent. in ready money.[173] The members of the Council expressed that if the

171 Letter to Court, 20th August, 1751, para. 46.

172 *Ibid*, para. 47.

173 *Ibid*, para. 49.

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merchants gave them 40,000 pieces of *gurrahs* and the full quantity of *soot romals* (handkerchiefs made of cotton thread) ordered and at the same time reduced the prices of fine *Cossajura malmals* (of 40/2) from Rs. 23-8 to Rs. 22-8, of superfine *Cossajura malmals* (of 40/2) from Rs. 30 to Rs. 27-8, of *Cossajura dooreas* (of 40/2) from Rs. 22 to 21-8, of *Santipur malmals* (of 40/2½) from Rs. 29 to 27-8, of *Balasore malmals* (of 20/1) from Rs. 14 to 13-8, of *Cossajura Busna* (of 40/2) from Rs. 28 to 19-4, then in case of their failure to pay them (the merchants) the 35 per cent. in October they would only take the penalty on the same terms as in the last year.[174] The merchants agreed to these, and on 15th July the Council directed the Warehouse-keeper to draw out the division of goods among the merchants and advanced them Rs. 17-3 per cent. on the contracts.[175] The merchants refused to contract for the Patna goods as they "were apprehensive if they should provide any that (the Nawab's) Durbar would demand the same charges as when" the Company's factory was there.[176] The Council again advanced Rs. 18-3 per cent. to the merchants on 22nd July.[177]

174 *Ibid*, para. 5.
175 *Ibid.*
176 *Ibid*, para. 51.
177 *Ibid*, para. 52.

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On the arrival of money from England per "Scarborough," the Council agreed to advance Rs. 1,81,000 to the merchants to make up 50 per cent. *dadney*, to send Rs. 1,60,000 to Dacca, half of which was to be paid to Fatechand and the other half was to be utilised for providing the investments there, to send Rs. 80,000 to Cassimbazar and Rs. 40,000 to Jugdea, to pay Rs. 40,000 to Omichand on account of his last year's balance and to advance him Rs. 70,000 on account of his saltpetre contract and to keep the balance for the expenses of the factory.[178] The Council also received a huge amount (current rupees 35,14,326) from Fort St. David and Bombay and distributed it among the merchants and the subordinate factories.[179]

In the month of May 1753, the Council in Calcutta ordered the Committee of Treasury to pay Rs. 240 to Radhakrishna Mallik, Rs. 664-4 to Ajodhyaram Basak, Rs. 2,368 to Jagarmohan Basak on account of their last year's *dadni* contracts.[180] After having examined the letters of the Court of Directors, for several years past, with a view to determine their definite orders about investments, the President, Export-Warehouse-keeper and the Sub-Export

1753-55.

178 *Ibid*, para. 146.

179 Letter to Court, 2nd January, 1752, paras. 33 and 34.

180 Consultations, 17th May, 1753.

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Warehouse-keeper made the following proposals before the Council either towards the end of May or beginning of June 1753 for carrying on investments in future :—"To contract on the old *musters* as usual, to receive no goods inferior to the *musters* of last year ; to sort the goods in the same method as the last year; to advance but 30 p.c. Dadney; to have a due proportion of ready-money goods; the penalties to be charged on the deficiencies of their whole contracts and on different species of goods short delivered instead of lumping it as formerly; to have it in our (the Council's) option to refuse or take the goods tendered us (the Council) after the expiration of the time limited in the Teeps (thumb impressions) and to reduce the price of goods."[181] When the merchants were acquainted with these proposals, they answered that "they could not possibly accept of those terms without being ruined" and they refused to "undertake the investment at a less advance of Dadney than 85 p.c." The Council, therefore, thought it necessary to provide investments by a different method and accordingly ordered "that notice in the several languages be affixed at the Fort gates. That the Company's Musters will be exposed to view in the Cottah,"[182]

181 Consultations, 4th June, 1753.

182 Cottah or Kota—"A fort, a stronghold, the fortified residence of a Zamindar, the wall of a fort.—" Wilson's Glossary, p. 295.

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that any person who wanted to contract with the Company for any of the sortments should submit his proposals to the Export-Warehouse-keeper, who would lay these before the Council for final approval and acceptance.[183] The merchants were then informed that they were no longer *dadni* merchants of the Company.[184]

In order to procure with facility the sortments of cloths made in and about Calcutta, the Council empowered the Export-Warehouse-keeper on 3rd September, 1753 "to contract with substantial Delolls (dālāls) and Picars as much as they would undertake to provide."[185] The Council then summoned the merchants on 13th September for the balances that were due from them and decided that "those merchants who could not sign their accounts," as settled by it, before 5th November, "should have Peons put upon them and be compelled to sign" and that if any of them became then willing to open their bales stocked in the Company's godowns and to offer the cloths to the Company as ready-money goods, then it would accept these in part of their balances and would prize these by the last year's muster.[186] In order to despatch that year's investments if possible by

183 Consultations, 4th June, 1753.

184 *Ibid.*

185 Letter to Court, 4th January, 1754, para. 54.

186 *Ibid*, paras. 55 and 56.

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the end of November the Council ordered the Export-Warehouse-keeper on 1st November to begin lading bales, but he could not do so owing to the belated arrival of goods from the *aurungs*.[187] When the Company's *gomastas* went to the *aurungs* they experienced great difficulties in procuring cloths of similar quality as those musters which the Council had given them for their guidance, because the merchants of the Company had debased most of the fabrics.[188] According to the order of the Council the *gomastas* had to reject large quantities of cloths, which were inferior to the musters. Advances were given to the weavers to enable them to produce such cloths as the Company's *gomastas* had been asked to procure but the cloths which the weavers brought in did not also come up to the standard of the model musters. By the end of 1753 A.D., the Council supplied the several *aurungs* with Rs. 8,98,135-11-9 and received back in goods from those places to the amount of Rs. 2,35,672-4-3; and goods of the value of Rs. 3,00,000 had been purchased and were ready in the *aurungs*.[189] The details about the investments during the years 1754 and 1755 have been already narrated in another connection.[190]

187 *Ibid*, para. 59.
188 *Ibid*, para. 53.
189 *Ibid*.
190 *Vide ante*.

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Section III.—History of the Important Factories.

Cassimbazar Factory.

About the beginning of the year 1741 the English factory at Cassimbazar was directed by the Council in Calcutta to provide 93,300 pieces of *gurrahs*, "to be governed by price of cotton and goodness of Fabrick."[191] In that year the Council received "Musters of Raw silk from Cossimbazar six annas a seer dearer than last year," and so ordered that factory to send 75 bales of 'Guzzerat,' 225 'November bund'[192] and 300 'Comercolly.'[193] On the 1st of April, 1741, Sir Francis Russel took charge of that factory from Mr. Richard Eyre. In the next year this factory and the *gurrah aurungs* near it were highly affected by the Maratha invasions. The walls of the factory at Cassimbazar were fortified by the erection of four good bastions and "indents for cannon and stores were

191 Letter to Court, 19th February, 1741, para. 17.

192 The term 'bund' meant season. There were three 'bunds' or seasons for spinning the cocoons. The November 'bund' commenced from 1st October to the end of February; the March 'bund' from 1st March to 30th June; the July 'bund' from 1st July to 30th September. —Mursidabad District Gezetteer, p. 13.

193 *Ibid*, dated 26th July, 1741, para. 2.

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complied with as near as possible."[194] The Cassimbazar factory could not "contract for any Gurrahs, cotton being so dear and Baly cotma the chief merchant being involved with the (Nawab's) Government."[195] When on 19th December, the Cassimbazar factory settled accounts with the merchants for raw silk, a balance of Rs. 56,490-4-0 became due from them. The merchants desired that the "silk piecegoods might be taken as Dadney" (perhaps this meant that they were to be given money in advance for silk piecegoods). This was approved of, and the merchants promised to pay a penalty on the money received by them.[196]

On 23rd January, 1743, the Council in Calcutta received samples of raw silk from Cassimbazar (November Bund at 6 rupees 1 anna, Guzzerat at 6 rupees 10 annas and Comercolly 5 rupees). Finding that the samples were all of good quality, the Council ordered for 600 bales.[197] On the 26th of February, Sir Francis Russel died of jaundice and dropsy, whereupon Mr. John Forster was appointed Chief of that factory and he set out for that place on 17th March.[198] But on 19th November, the President of the Council in Calcutta declared

194 *Ibid*, dated 8th January, 1742, paras. 131-32.
195 *Ibid*, dated 31st July, 1742, para. 6.
196 *Ibid*, dated 3rd February, 1743, para. 71.
197 *Ibid*, p. 152.
198 Letter to Court, 13th August 1743, para. 15.

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that he would start for Europe in order to recover his health. Mr. Halsey was therefore appointed as the Chief of the Cassimbazar factory and Mr. Forster returned to his seat at the Council in Calcutta.[199] Mr. Russel had not properly settled the accounts with the merchants at Cassimbazar. Those merchants alleged that Mr. Russel had taken several parcels of their goods on his account "for the amount of which they accepted credit in account with the Company."[200] Four merchants applied for 14,000 rupees, which were due for *dadni* money though "they had signed Receipts for the full Dadney but left that sum in Sir Francis hands for which he gave notes of Hand."[201] Fatechand also demanded Rs. 25,000, which Mr. Russel had borrowed from him, by sending the note to the Chief of the Cassimbazar factory who thereupon replied that administrators had been appointed by the Mayor's Court and that after Mr. Russel's property had been collected, an equal distribution would be made among all his creditors. But the *gomastas* of Fatechand told him that his master knew nobody but the Company. To avoid further troubles the majority in the Council agreed to accommodate matters with Fatechand "who

[199] Letter to Court, 9th February, 1744, para. 119.
[200] Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, para. 31.
[201] *Ibid*, para. 33.

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would take nothing less than the Principal, accordingly the Chief and Council (at Cassimbazar) gave a Note as interest for 25,000 rupees."[202] On the 2nd of July, the Cassimbazar factory agreed to supply "4,335 Tassaties (inferior sort of silk cloth) plain, 2,150 striped, 15,450 Bandannoes (bandana) at last years prices and 80 per cent. Advance."[203] The gantlemen at the Cassimbazar factory contracted for 1,240 maunds of '*November Bund*' at Rs. 6-1-0 per seer, 340 maunds Guzzerat at Rs. 5-14 per seer, and three or four merchants stood in security for the *dadni*.[204] The Chief of that factory agreed to purchase silk piecegoods, *viz.*, 9,525 pieces of *taffaties* at 8 rupees, red *taffaties* at Rs. 8-6-0, black *taffaties* at Rs. 8-2-0, 2,485 striped pieces at Rs. 8-4-0, 3,450 pieces of new '*romals*' (handkerchiefs) at Rs. 7-3-0, 23,850 pieces of ordinary '*bandannoes*' (bandana)[205] at Rs. 3-12-0, 3,600 pieces of fine '*bandannoes*' at Rs. 4-4-0, 1,350 pieces of '*choppasarrys*' (perhaps chapasaries, *i.e.*, saries with figures printed on them), 600 pieces of new '*bandannoes*,' 300 pieces of '*danadars*.' Rupees

202 Letter to Court, 5th December, 1743, paras. 12-16.

203 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, para. 18.

204 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 8.

205 "This term is probably applied to the rich yellow or red silk handkerchief, with diamond spots left white by pressure applied to prevent their receiving the dye."—Hobson-Jobson, p. 43.

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4,000 were advanced to a merchant for procuring white silk on a commission of 2 as. per seer. The Cassimbazar factory also contracted for 39,000 pieces of '*Gurrahs*' (Garha, coarse Indian cloth) of 39 covides at Rs. 70 and 8,000 pieces at Rs. 72.[206] On the 20th of January, 1745, the Chief of that factory informed the authorities in Calcutta that he had "prevailed on Merchants to abate 3 annas seer and to agree for November Bund silk at Rs. 5-14, Guzzerat 6 rupes 7 annas, Comercolly 5 rupees 11 annas per seer the A Musters were good except Comercolly and on 29th added that the price could not be lowered without apparent Risque of spoiling the silk, but from the Dispute between the Nabob and Mustapha Cawn (Mustafa Khan, the leader of the Afghans) not prudent to make any absolute contract or advance Dadni."[207] He again wrote on 21st March, 1745, that he had "contracted for Raw silk *November Bund* 1,240 Maund, *Guzzerat* 340, *Comercolly* 1,170" and added on the 30th that he had "contracted for 58,795 silk piecegoods at last year's prices advancing Rupees 1-12-0 per piece on *Lungee* Romals."[208] He also informed on 26th April that he had "contracted for

[206] Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, paras. 14, 15, 16.

[207] Letter to Court, 9th February, 1745, para. 127.

[208] Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745, para. 7.

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83,900 *Gurrahs* and 1,750 *Doosooties* at 70 Rupees a corge for Gurrahs, and (on) 30th May 40,000 more Gurrahs." [209] He further contracted for 1,750 pieces of flowered *bandannoes*.[210]

On 15th March, 1746, Mr. Wadham Brooke proceeded to Cassimbazar as Chief of the factory there. According to the orders of the Council the men of that factory sent to Calcutta on 18th April a list of goods lying in their godowns, also the musters of raw silk, the price of 'A' November bund at 7 rupees per seer and of other sortments, and at the same time requested for a supply of money as they thought that they would not be able to borrow more than 1,50,000 rupees from Jagat Seth or other shroffs (bankers).[211] The Council in Calcutta complained about the exorbitant prices demanded by the merchants, and considering that the price would exceed Rs. 5-12-0 per seer for the letter A, it ordered the Cassimbazar factory to provide not more than 600 bales, *viz.*, *November Bund* 275 bales, *Comercolly* 250 bales and *Guzzerat* 75 bales, but directed it to procure as much white silk as possible because there was a great demand for it by the home authorities.[211a] After

209 *Ibid*, para. 8.

210 Letter to Court, 31st January, 1746, para. 18.

211 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 13.

211a The French in Bengal also sent Cassimbazar silk to Surat and other places. Letter from Chandernagore

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receiving five chests of bullion from Fort St. George the Council in Calcutta forwarded these on 28th April to Cassimbazar,[212] and also several lacs of rupees on 7th May.[213] On 19th May the Chief of that factory wrote to the Council that due to the troubles (*e.g.*, the Maratha invasion) under which the merchants had to labour, they expressed their inability to pay the 10 per cent. penalty on the balance of silk and silk piecegoods, and that they had no prospect of borrowing more than 1 lac of rupees which with what they had with them would not be sufficient for advancing in full for raw silk " so that unless some expedient be found out for procuring further sums they shall be entirely at a stand in every other branch of their Investment and there was then about 20,000 pieces of *Gurrahs* brought in to be taken in part of the Ballances remaining on the last year's contract." In reply the Council asked the gentlemen there to accept the merchants' proposal, as *gurrahs* were indispensably necessary for the expected tonnage, and also to advance money for that year's silk as usual ; it also noted that in case the merchants who were "indebted should not pay

Council to the Superior Council and Chief at Surat, dated 30th January, 1745, in *Correspondance du Conseil de Chandernagore avec divers 2^e partie*, p. 319.

212 *Ibid.*

213 *Ibid*, para. 14.

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they (the gentlemen of the Cassimbazar factory) must oblige their security to make good their debts but if they are convinced the times will not allow of their taking the penalty of 10 p.c. on their ballances for silk and silk piecegoods " they might excuse the merchants but they "must exert themselves in their endeavours to procure money there for the other branches of their Investment for money was so scarce" in Calcutta that the Council was not in a position to supply them sufficiently though " it desired to know what sum would answer their occasions."[214] On 27th June the Calcutta Council received a letter from the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory to the effect that "they had contracted for Raw silk as follows, *November Bund* 1,164 mds., *Guzarat* 302 mds., *Comercolly* 1,065 mds., and has also fixed a price on the silk piecegoods which they had not been able to reduce lower than 9 rupees 6 annas per piece for the plain '*Tassaties*' and so in proportion for other sortments and that as soon as they can be supplied with sufficient money they should deliver out '*dadney*' for the quantity ordered. That two of the merchants had agreed to provide about 30 maunds of the white Raw silk on condition of 2 Annas per seer commission on the *Aurung* price which is 7 rupees per seer the A and that they had accepted their offer, that they have not been

[214] *Ibid*, para. 15.

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wanting in their best endeavours to procure money there for their Investment and they shall continue the like but have not a prospect of borrowing more than what they advised" the Council on the 19th of May; they also noted that unless they could be supplied with money "every other branch of the investment except the silk will be entirely at a stand but to complete their contracts for silk and silk piecegoods they shall want about three Lacks of Rupees more than what" the Council had already sent to them or what they would be able to borrow; they further remarked that as they were "uncertain what quantity of *Doosutys* and *Gurrahs* their merchants would undertake (to provide) they could not yet compute what sums would be necessary for those articles about which they will inform the Council as soon as they come to know of these."[215] In another letter, dated 16th July, they informed the Council "that they had so little success in procuring money that they had not yet given out the usual advance on Raw silk and must have delayed contracting for silk piecegoods" but for the strict orders of the Council. Upon the repeated complaints of the Cassimbazar factory for want of money, the Council in Calcutta permitted it to draw on the Council payable in Calcutta "any money that might be offered to them there."[216] It

215 *Ibid*, para. 16.

216 *Ibid*.

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accordingly drew on the account of the Council in Calcutta Rs. 69,554-12-9 and the Council also sent there the "gold *mohurs* which were imported from Fort St. George by the Phazel Salam." [217]

Towards the end of March 1747, the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory received 30 chests of bullion from the Council in Calcutta and they replied on 6th April that they would send (in return) a lac of rupees as soon as they could get it from Jagat Seth's house and also an order for another half lac from one of his (Jagat Seth's) houses (probably in Calcutta); but they noted their apprehension that the "drawing of so much money from them (Seths) would hurt their credit." [218] On 18th April, the Council sent 20 other chests of bullion under the care of Ensign English with the hope of getting coins in return.[219] Ensign English returned to Calcutta on 5th May with 1,00,000 new sicca coins and a bill on Jagat Seth's house there for 50,000 siccas more.[220]

All the attempts of the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory in 1747 to settle the price of raw silk with the merchants and to contract for a *muster* of '*November Bund*' on the last year's price

217 *Ibid.*

218 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 43.

219 *Ibid*, para. 176.

220 *Ibid*, para. 180.

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failed, and at last they contracted on the following prices :—*'November Bund'* Rs. 9-4-0 per seer the A ; *' Guzzrat '* Rs. 9-13 ; ' Commercolly ' at Rs. 9-1-0. The prices of the last two species were almost equal to those of the previous year.[221] The merchants at Cassimbazar also expressed their unwillingness to comply with the orders of the Court of Directors "for not advancing above (thirty) 30 per cent. upon raw silk and *Gurrahs* and providing all other Goods for ready money,"[222] especially because they had been living under bad conditions But the Council in Calcutta held "that this would ever be the case, till an expedient was found out to prevent the people in mean condition becoming security for each other" and referred the matter to the Court of Directors.[223] The price of raw silk could not be reduced for various reasons and the lowest price on which the merchants were ready to contract for *gurrahs* was eighty *dasmasa* rupees per *corge*. The gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory wrote to the Council on 7th May, 1747, that they would try their best to recover the balances due from the merchants before giving them any other amount, and with regard to the expedient for realising money to be advanced hereafter to the merchants they remarked that the

221 *Ibid*, para. 177.
222 *Ibid.*
223 *Ibid.*

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abolition of the office of broker was "by experience found highly detrimental to.....(the Company's) business, especially in contracts for the investment the Merchants being come to such a pitch as to fix what prices they pleased on their Goods."[224] They suggested that this evil could be removed by "no other method than by having a Ruler over them, of wealth and credit of their own cast(e) in order to obviate any Debts from falling on your Honours in future" and they recommended Bally Cotmah, who possessed a good record of such services, for this chiefship over the merchants.[225]

The Council considered this representation of the Cassimbazar Factory on 22nd May; the majority were of opinion that no broker should be appointed at Cassimbazar, and that in view of the high prices of raw silk only one-third of the former orders should be contracted for.[226] On the same day the Council communicated its resolutions to the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory, who replied on 1st July that they had contracted with their merchants for 10 annas per seer less than what had been fixed to the *musters* sent there. By the month of August they succeeded in bringing down the price by four annas more and they thought it difficult to bring it further down. At

224 *Ibid*, para. 181.
225 *Ibid.*
226 *Ibid*, para. 182.

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this the Council in Calcutta considered it advisable to increase the quantity of goods ordered and directed the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory to provide 400 bales in all.

The Cassimbazar factory was then in great want of money because the 20 chests of bullion, which had been sent there, were spent in paying off the interest of their notes to Jagat Seth's house for two years past ; it received nothing from Dacca factory except a bill of 25,000 sicca rupees and the Seths agreed to pay 203 sicca rupees for the bullion.[227] As the Council in Calcutta had ordered the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory to increase the quantity of raw silk, they prayed for further supply of money for providing that as well as other parts of the investment.[228] The Council replied on 28th August that they were wholly unable to send them any supply before the arrival of the ships from home and ordered them to "use their Endeavours to furnish themselves from Juggut Seat's house."[229]

On 29th September, the Council sent to the gentlemen at Cassimbazar a new list of investments for that year and informed them that ships were being prepared for sending them 20 chests of bullion for exchange at the house of Jagat Seth, to

227 *Ibid*, para. 191.
228 *Ibid.*
229 *Ibid.*

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whom the President had sent a letter requesting him to "order Ten chests thereby to be paid by this House in Calcutta" for the currency of the Company's business there and to pay for the other ten chests to their factory at Cassimbazar. The Council further informed the gentlemen at the said factory that they had "certain advice of a large supply of Bullion being on the way and it shall be duly sent to be disposed off to them and if that they could get a further supply from Dacca it would be an acceptable piece of service."[230] The Seths agreed to pay not more than Rs. 201 for the bullion in the manner desired by the Council, and the Cassimbazar factory could make no satisfactory progress in the matter of procuring investments for want of money. It contracted for 58,000 pieces of *gurrahs* at Rs. 75 per corge, which even it did not hope to get if there was no timely supply of money or if the Marathas appeared again.[231] It sent 32 bales of *gurrahs* to Calcutta out of the Company's contract on 30th September and on 16th October sent to the Council a Bill of Exchange on Jagat Seth's house in Calcutta for 77,000 new sicca rupees.[232] But the Calcutta Council being much in debt for their current expenses and also being

230 *Ibid*, para. 193.
231 *Ibid*, para. 194.
232 *Ibid*, paras. 196 and 197.

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pressed for money by the gentlemen at Fort St. David directed the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory that they should procure another bill for 50,000 sicca rupees, and that if they had already received the sum for the ten chests of bullion for their own factory then they would send that sum by boats as soon as possible.[233]

The gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory were already in want of money, and so they wrote to the Council on 24th October by protesting against the " drawing so much money out of their hands at a time when they were about delivering out to their Merchants to enable them to perform their contracts for Raw silk as it was certain that many of them had strained their credit so much in purchasing the Putney [234] as to be unable to carry on the expense of winding it off without some assistance which would be then quite (out) of their power to give them....." [235] They had been able to procure only 36,000 sicca rupees for 10 chests of bullion from the Seths, which they sent to Calcutta and the Seths promised to pay the remainder in three or four days. They also informed the Council that agreeably to the former orders of the Company they did not pay *dadni* to

233 *Ibid*, para. 198.

234 ' Act of ordering goods from a manufactuer.' —Wilson's Glossary, etc., p. 410.

235 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 199.

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those merchants who had not cleared off their balances, but that there was one among them named Mohan Biswas, who was indebted to the Company for Rs. 4,055-9-6 pies but was himself a considerable creditor of Sir Francis Russel for which he threatened to renew his complaints before the Nawab's *darbar*, where (as the Company's vakils apprehended) he might gain his point. They therefore suggested the payment of *dadni* to him for preventing the Company's "affairs from being embroiled" as he had promised to clear half of his debt in that year and the remainder in the next.[236] There were also other merchants indebted to the Company whom they thought of paying in this method and solicited the opinion and orders of the Council in that matter. They sent four chests of silver to Calcutta on the same day (24th October). Taking into consideration their financial difficulties, the Council permitted them to keep for themselves the remainder of what they were to receive from Jagat Seth's house on account of bullion. But it peremptorily ordered them "not to advance money to Mohun Biswass and others indebted on their old contracts unless undoubted security be given for money to be advanced on fresh contracts as also for the payment of the old Ballances at the time they stipulated."[237] On 28th November they

[236] *Ibid.*

[237] *Ibid*, para. 201.

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informed the Council that they would act exactly according to its orders.

The invasions of the Marathas put the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory at a great disadvantage and they wrote to the Council on 14th January, 1748, that "their merchants would fall very short in their contracts for *Gurrahs* and Raw silk." [238] On 9th February, Srikrishna and Anandiram, two bankers of Calcutta, informed the Council through their own *gomastas* that "they had received intelligence from Suratt (Surat) that Two Bills of Exchange for Fifty thousand rupees 50,000 each were drawn on them (by Mr. Wake, President of the Bombay Council) in favour of the Calcutta Council and that they had the money with them which they were ready to pay into their factory at Cassimbazar." [239] In view of the financial difficulties of the Company, the Council ordered the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory to receive the amount and to send down to Calcutta 50,000 sicca rupees out of it. [240] They were also directed on 2nd May to begin collecting investments on the arrival of Mr. Brooke. But the latter, after his arrival there, wrote to the Council on 24th May "that it was impracticable to make any (investments) their merchants alledging want of money

[238] Letter to Court, 24th February, 1748, para. 95.
[239] *Ibid*, para. 135.
[240] *Ibid*, para. 151.

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and credit, and very pressing for Ballances due them last year for Goods delivered to the amount of 3 Laacks of Rupees. That when this sum was paid, they would contract for silk at the following Rates being as low as they could reduce them: *November Bund* Rs. 7-8-0 per seer, *Guzzerat* Rs. 8-1-0 per seer, and *Comercolly* Rs. 7-5-0 per seer." [241] By the month of July the merchants at Cassimbazar began to clamour for ready money due from the Company and they were made easy for some time by the Council's assurance that their demands would be supplied with 'out of the first money that come to hand.' [242] In the month of August the bales sent from Cassimbazar to Calcutta were stopped by the *chowkey* (toll-house) at Saydabad and these could be obtained after the payment of 2,580 rupees. [243] By September the merchants at Cassimbazar wanted " to know what part of the money would be sent them, with which if satisfied they might then promise a considerable Investment in Raw silk and silk piece-goods but few or no *Gurrahs*, the season for providing them being almost over." [244] By the month of October, the merchants could be persuaded to bring down the price of raw silk to Rs. 6-12-0 for *November*

241 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 46.
242 *Ibid*, paras. 47 and 49.
243 *Ibid*, para. 50.
244 *Ibid*, para. 52.

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Bund, and they agreed to bring in 1,490 maunds at that rate.[245] By the beginning of December the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory finished their contracts for raw silk on that rate, but the merchants pressed them very much to request the Council for sending them a part of the treasure received per 'Bombay Castle.' Jagat Seth Mahatabchand was also angry for not receiving any share of it as large sums of money had been lent out by him to the gentlemen at the different factories. In order to bring him to temper the Council wrote the following to the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory:—"We should be always glad to serve him when in our power but that the supply of the Bombay Castle was so very small that we could not spare him from our own investment any money that would be satisfactory and therefore hoped he would not take amiss waiting a little longer as we expected a large supply by the latter ships."[246]

In the following year the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory wrote pressingly for money, especially for the five chests of bullion which had been reserved for them. But considering that the "charges would run very high in sending a large Party of Guards with so small a sum of treasure," the Council changed its decision and

245 *Ibid*, para. 54.

246 Letter to Court, 22nd December, 1748, para. 11.

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sent a bill of exchange from one Ramkrishna Seth for Rs. 23,400 on 6th April.[247] Mr. Wadham Brooke was dismissed from the chiefship of the Cassimbazar factory and Mr. Edward Eyles was appointed in his place. In the next year the Council sent some money to the Cassimbazar factory, and the gentlemen there informed the Council on 10th October, 1752, of the safe "arrival of the treasure sent them under the care of Ensign Muir, of a deficiency of two Madras rupees in the treasure sent up with Mr. Watts," and noted that they hoped to send to Calcutta 30 bales of silk, 20 *chattaks* of silk piecegoods and upwards of 100 bales of *gurrahs* in the beginning of November. In the same month the merchants at Cassimbazar made very pressing demands for having their last year's balances paid off in order to provide a good investment for the coming year ; the Seths also were equally pressing for getting their balances cleared at Cassimbazar and Dacca and they promised to lend thereafter to the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory whatever they might require in future. Mr. Watts, who had then succeeded Mr. Eyles as chief of the Cassimbazar factory, therefore, wrote to the Council in Calcutta on 22nd October for "a large supply of money to comply with those demands, having likewise several notes to pay amounting to near a lack

247 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749, para. 23.

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of rupees."[248] One Nimmo Sen (Nimai Sen) having lost several notes[249] of the Company for the balance due to him requested the chief of the Cassimbazar factory to grant him new ones for which he was ready to give an indemnification and security.[250] Early in November the Calcutta Council received 223 of the *November bunds* silk and 62 bales of *gurrahs* from Cassimbazar and then permitted the chief of that factory to pay Nimai Sen "the balance due to him on the notes he lost on taking sufficient security from him and his whole family to indemnify the Company in case these notes should appear hereafter."[251] Again on 22nd December it received from the Cassimbazar factory 268 bales of cloth and musters of 16 chests of plain *tassaties* along with an account of the state of their factory up to 16th December and a copy of their books, prize-books, etc., up to 16th April, 1752.[252]

The gentlemen at Cassimbazar received 12 chests of Arcot rupees from the Calcutta Council

248 Consultations, 27th October, 1752.

		Dasmasa		
		Rs.	A.	P.
249	One dated 23rd March, 1752, for	11,750	8	0
	One dated 27th March, 1752, for	8,179	3	3
	One dated 9th April, 1752, for	9,215	8	0
	One dated 1st May, 1752, for	7,721	1	9

250 Consultations, 27th October, 1752.

251 Consultations, 9th November, 1752.

252 Consultations, 28th December, 1752.

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in the middle of March 1753, and they informed the Council in their letter of 12th March that Raghunath Biswas and Narayan Biswas "had represented to them in case they should be able to get credit to pay some small part of their debt to the Company and would give an undoubted security to pay an annual sum till their debt was discharged."[253] The Council permitted them to "take those two persons into their Dadney provided they kept an undoubted security in their hands that they do not become further indebted" to the Company.[254] With great difficulty they were able to prevail on the merchants to contract for silk upon the same terms as in last year, that is, for 1,000 maunds of the November *bund* silk at the rate of Rs. 7-12 per seer and 800 maunds of Guzzerat *bund* at the rate of Rs. 8-5 per seer.[255] They also contracted for silk piecegoods on the same terms as in last year and could not reduce the prices of either raw silk or silk piecegoods, inspite of the repeated orders of the Council to that effect, because the price of *patni* (goods commissioned or manufactured to order) was 6 to 8 annas per seer dearer than it had been for the last several years. They could not wait further as the Gujrat merchants had been also trying to buy the

253 Letter to Court, 4th January, 1754, para. 60.

254 *Ibid*, para. 62.

255 *Ibid*, para. 64.

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November bund silks.[256] They also persuaded the merchants "to agree for the 36 covid[257] *gurrahs* at one Rupee per Corge less than last year and the other sortments in proportion." [258] The Council in Calcutta sent to them on 30th July several chests of Madras rupees and ten chests of bullion for getting these coined into siccas for the Company's use in Calcutta; and also sent ten chests of Arcot rupees and ten chest of Madras rupees on 30th August.[259] On inspecting the goods received that year from Cassimbazar the members of the Council in Calcutta saw that the '*Guzzerat* silks' were of a very bad quality. They, therefore, "took out of several bales a small quantity of each letter and sent it up to the gentlemen there (Cassimbazar) that they might compare them with the musters they contracted on" and might then send these to Calcutta for the approbation of the Council. They also demanded "sufficient reasons for so great a difference in the quality of the silk" [260] to which the gentlemen at Cassimbazar replied that "this was due to the rise of the prices of Putney from 1 Rupee to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per seer which makes a difference of more than 50,000 Rupees to the merchants." [261]

256 *Ibid*, para. 61. 257 *Vide ante*.
258 Letter to Court, 4th January 1754, para. 64.
259 *Ibid*, para. 68.
260 *Ibid*, para. 71.
261 *Ibid*.

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The Cassimbazar factors informed the Council in Calcutta on 22nd April, 1754, that " they had at last prevailed with some of their merchants to make proposals of contract for Raw Silk but that they insisted on 8 Rupees per seer for the November bund and 8-9 per seer for the Guzzerat which prices (though very extravagant) they had no hopes of reducing as their Merchants seemed rather to decline than engage in that Article even at that exorbitant Rate,"[262] and they sent those musters of silk for which the merchants had agreed to contract. After inspecting the musters the Council informed Mr. Watts, chief of the Cassimbazar factory, that these were inferior to the musters which they had previously contracted on and the price demanded for November *bund* silk was also "too extravagant to be complied with" and directed him and his Council to " go on providing the other sortments of silk in the same manner unless they could bring their Merchants to better terms "[263] and to try for better cloths to avoid " debasing by degrees the quality of their silk investments." When the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory informed the merchants about those orders of the Council in Calcutta, they replied that they had agreed to provide silk for that year only " in order to obtain the continuance

[262] Letter to Court, 7th December, 1754, para. 70.

[263] *Ibid*, para. 71.

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of the Favour and protection of the Factory without any prospect of advantage and were very glad to be excused from engaging in that branch of business."[264] At last the gentlemen at the factory were able to persuade the merchants by the end of May to contract for 1,000 maunds of November *bund* silk.[265] The merchants at Cassimbazar did not contract for Guzzerat silk, and so the Council in Calcutta directed the factors there to send money to the aurungs early in the season for procuring certain quantity of it and sent them Rs. 766,680-0-0 for their contracts.[266] As we have already noted, in that year the Cassimbazar factory were permitted by the Council to establish four new aurungs at Elambazar, Nannur, Murtali and Kagram, which were, however, withdrawn next year.

It is well known that with the outbreak of quarrels of the English with Nawab Sirajuddowla, the Cassimbazar factory was stormed, its chief Mr. Watts had to suffer much and the factory was reduced to a pitiable condition during the years 1756-57.[267] Its fortune, however, took a better turn after English victory at Plassey. In the year 1758 the members of that factory informed the Council in Calcutta that "upon examining the accounts of Kussenundah, the Company's

264 *Ibid*, para. 72.
265 *Ibid*, para. 77.
266 *Ibid*, paras. 81 and 82.
267 *Vide ante*.

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Gomastah, they had found great reason to suspect him guilty of several frauds in the management of the investments."[268] In their letters to the Council, dated 8th and 13th December, 1759, they wrote for a supply of at least two lacs of rupees for purchasing only '*November Bund*' raw silk. In 1763 that factory asked for 9 lacs of rupees as advance for the purchase of silk.

Patna Factory.

Patna was at that time a "place of a very considerable trade."[269] Its importance was greatly due to the local manufacture of saltpetre. The records of the period show how the European factories at that place procured saltpetre, which was one of the most important articles of the Company's investments. This brought the English into occasional conflicts with the Dutch, the French and also with the native merchants.[270]

The advance of Safdar Jang, the Subahdar of Oudh, towards Patna during the third week of December 1742 created troubles for the Patna factory in the following manner:— "The Chief and Council obliged to furnish boats for Transporting his Forces cross (across)

268 Letter to Court, 31st December, 1758, para. 53.

269 Rennel, *Memoir of the Map of Indostan*, p. 62.

270 Details have been given in my paper on '*Saltpetre Trade of the Company*' *published in the Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission, 1930 (Patna Session).*

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Toneah (?) river, his people commit outrages, are under no command.....He forbid all intercourse with Bengal. They are in a manner confined to the Factory at Patna, could not send goods away.....''[271] Investments from Patna fell short on account of these troubles and also due to disputes with the Dutch. No *chintz* (printed or spotted cotton cloth) or *Laccowries* were available except only two chinted handkerchiefs.[272] Three mud bastions and a trench were erected at that time to the east and south of the Patna factory.[273] On account of Mr. Cole's maladministration of the Patna factory,[274] the authorities in Calcutta ordered him to come down to Calcutta with Mr. Eyre after handing over the charge of that factory to Mr. Pattle. Mr. Cole had not settled his accounts with Omichand and other merchants but had put all of them under confinement on their raising clamours for it; and they were

[271] Letter to Court, 8th January, 1742, paras. 93 and 94.

[272] Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, paras. 57 and 58.

[273] *Ibid*, para. 103.

[274] Mr. Humffreys Cole was appointed to succeed Mr. Barker to the chiefship of the Patna factory in 1732. Consultations, Fort William, 20th July, 1732, contained in "Bengal letters from the Coast and Bay, 1731-33."

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afterwards released by orders of the Nawab's Government. These happened in the month of December 1742, and since then up to the 1st of January, 1743, the accounts were adjusted by arbitration and otherwise.[275] On 19th September Mr. Barwell was appointed Chief of the Patna factory with Messrs. Brown and Amyatt as assistants.

In the year 1744 the Patna factory "promised to procure saltpetre and piecegoods on cheapest and securest terms."[276] But the troubles originating from the complaints of Deepchand[277a] and other *assamies*[277] against the conduct of Mr. Cole continued. The Company appointed supervisors to enquire into the matter, and the Court of Directors ordered that the gentlemen who were at Patna in Mr. Cole's time should accompany the supervisors there in order to "give them their best assistance and informations in the enquiry they were to make."[278] The Council in Calcutta, therefore, decided to send Mr. Eyre

[275] Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 151.

[276] Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 20.

[277] "A cultivator, a tenant, a renter, a non-proprietary cultivator; also a dependent; also a debtor, a culprit, a criminal, a defendant in a suit."—Wilson's Glossary, p. 35.

[277a] A letter from Chandernagore to Mr. Huyghens, President of the Dutch Council at Hugli, dated 30th October, 1746, refers to Deepchand as faujdar of Chuprah.

[278] Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 69.

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to Patna and Mr. Pattle was asked to remain there till the arrival of the supervisors ; Messrs. Richard Becher and William Baillie were also ordered to set out with the supervisors. When the time for the supervisors' proceeding to Patna drew near the Council in Calcutta asked Kasiram Mitra, Mr. Cole's *banian*, on 21st July, 1746, "to go with them and assist in clearing up the Merchants and *Assamies* accounts there."[279] He replied that he was Mr. Cole's servant and could not go there without his orders. But as the Court of Directors had sent strict orders for sending him to Patna along with the supervisors, the Council decided to confine him in the factory in Calcutta till they set out, and at the same time ordered its Secretary to write to Mr. Goddard, Mr. Cole's attorney, to attend the Council next day for handing over all papers and vouchers relating to the accounts of the Patna *assamies* and merchants.[280] Next day Mr. Goddard appeared before the Calcutta Council and, on being asked for the papers, he replied that 'he would consider of it and give his answer in writing.' So the Council received a letter from Mr. Goddard, dated 23rd July—a letter which was very long and was "in no wise answering the purpose."[281] On 25th July, the Council made an enquiry from Kasiram Mitra as to

279 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 73.

280 *Ibid.*

281 *Ibid*, para. 74.

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what papers he could carry with him to Patna. He replied that "all his Books and Papers that had escaped the fire at Patna were left behind with Mr. Pattle who afterwards sent them down in chests, that these chests were landed at the Factory and after the Books which belonged to the Company were taken out the chests with the remaining Books and Papers were delivered to Mr. Cole who had them held up and that he (Kasiram Mitra) has not seen since."[282] Mr. Goddard also could not supply any such papers, and thus no papers belonging to Kasiram Mitra ever reached the Company.

On 11th August, 1746, Ray Singh, the late vakil of the Company at Patna, sent a petition, written in Persian language, to the President of the Council in Calcutta charging Mr. Barwell, chief of the Patna factory, and also Mir Assul, the then *vakil* of the Company at Patna, with 'malpractices,' and, on appearing before the Council, he swore to the truth of his statement.[283] The Council considered that it would be necessary to give some encouragement to Ray Singh "to assist the Supervisors in settling the disputed accounts with Omichand, Deepchand, and *Assamies*" and, therefore, "sent for him and assured him that he should have his post of Vacqueel (Vakil) again in case he proved what

[282] *Ibid.*

[283] *Ibid*, para. 77.

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he had asserted in his petition." [284] In the same petition Ray Singh had also asked for the sum of Rs. 4,000 which he had previously paid to the gentlemen at the Patna Factory, and he produced before the Council Mr. Cole's certificate to the effect "that he had paid that Money and Mr. Cole having credited Omichand (and) Deepchund's Accounts by that sum which they refused to accept of though they still detain in their hands Ray Singh's note for that money which he borrowed of them to pay the Durbar by Mr. Cole's orders." [285] The Council agreed that the supervisors would be instructed to enquire into that affair and that "if they found it reasonable to credit Omichand (and) Deepchund's Accounts with that sum, they are to endeavour to get Ray Singh's Note out of their hands and deliver it to him or otherwise to do him justice in this point." [286] On 1st September, 1746, the instructions, orders and papers for the supervisors proceeding to Patna were read and signed by the Council and they were ordered to proceed thither taking Kasiram Mitra with them. They had to start so late (2nd September) owing to scarcity of boats and *dandis* (boatmen) which could be procured with great difficulty.[287]

284 *Ibid*, para. 81.
285 *Ibid.*
286 *Ibid.*
287 *Ibid*, para. 84.

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The Supervisors arrived at Patna on 21st October; Mr. Barwell made over charge of that factory to Mr. Jackson ; Messrs. Baillie and Gordon took their seats at the Patna Board and one Narsing, who had been formerly the Company's under-vakil, was appointed "to transact the (Company's) business at the (Nawab's) Durbar."[288] After examining the charges against Mr. Barwell, article by article, the Council in Calcutta found "nothing criminal proved" against him and reappointed him in the month of December to the chiefship of the Patna factory asking him also to join with the supervisors in enquiring into the affairs concerning Mr. Cole's administration.[289] In order to enable the supervisors to live in a respectable manner, the Council decided to pay them three months' expenses at five hundred and eighty-five rupees eight annas per month.[290]

Before the supervisors examined Mr. Cole's affairs, the latter had gone away to Fort St. George "in an ungentle and underhand manner inspite of the President's strong remonstrances," which meant that "he was guilty and wanted to evade coming to a fair Adjustment."[291] He returned to Calcutta on 8th October, 1746, and was asked by the Council to proceed to Patna for helping the

288 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 155.
289 *Ibid*, paras. 159 and 162.
290 *Ibid*, para. 182.
291 *Ibid*, para. 174.

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supervisors. He gave his answer in writing on 12th October; we do not know definitely what it was.

In their letter of 9th November, 1746, the supervisors at Patna informed the Council in Calcutta that though for preventing quarrels with the Nawab's government it might then appear necessary to postpone the examination of Deepchand's accounts till the saltpetre fleet was despatched, yet it would not be possible to make delay for a long period, because Deepchand had already applied to Haji Ahmad who had sent frequent messages and orders to the supervisors for settling Deepchand's accounts immediately, failing which he threatened "to use them very ill."[292] This gave the supervisors "but an indifferent prospect." They solicited the instructions of the Council in Calcutta as to how they should act if Omichand and Deepchand did not settle their accounts "in a fair Mercantile way or make demands on them no ways relating" to the Company which, as the supervisors noted, they had already begun to do by "applying to them about the Deposite made by them and their private concerns with Mr. Cole."[293] The President and the members of the Council replied on 20th November that they agreed to the proposal of the

[292] *Ibid*, para. 188.
[293] *Ibid.*

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supervisors that it would be better to defer entering into Deepchand's accounts till the saltpetre was dispatched. They also informed the supervisors that if the government of Haji Ahmad intervened and wanted them to act in a manner that was not 'fair and mercantile' they must not comply with that, and that if they suffered any violence on that account, then the Company would apply to the Nawab of Murshidabad for redress. It was noted that if the Nawab of Murshidabad also joined in the violence then the Company would resist him and stand on its defence, which they had been authorised to do by the Court of Directors. The supervisors were also authorised, in case of necessity, to acquaint Haji Ahmad's *darbar* that the Company was "ordered to make Reprisals in case any injustice be done to them,"[294] because the Council believed that such "Information would be sufficient to prevent violence being offered as it has been customary at these *Durbars* to allow Merchants to settle their accounts in a fair manner whenever it has been required by either party."[295] The supervisors experienced great difficulties in settling the accounts. They saw that the accounts delivered by the merchants and the *assamies* to the former supervisors had never been adjusted and did not agree with the Company's accounts for the last ten

[294] *Ibid*, para. 189.

[295] *Ibid*.

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or twelve years. They could not find any old servant to help them in the matter, and on searching for books and papers belonging to the Patna factory, Chuprah and Singhia, they were informed by Messrs. Pattle and Eyre that all the papers relating thereto belonging to Kasiram Mitra or Shyam Mitra had been sent down from that place and that they knew of no other books except translations of a few lying in the hands of Gokul Basak at Singhia which could not be of much help in settling the accounts. Kasiram Mitra also told them plainly that he had no papers or accounts and that he could afford no other help than what he could say from memory. The merchants and the *assamies* who stood heavily indebted to the Company had in general turned bankrupts, and so, even if the supervisors could prove their indebtedness, very little could be recovered and that probably not without approaching the Nawab's government which meant "further loss and expense."[296] In their letter of 16th November, the supervisors informed the Council in Calcutta of their difficulties in settling the accounts of the merchants and the *assamies* for the last twelve years and solicited definite orders as to how they should proceed.[297] While considering this letter, the Council summoned Mr. Cole and asked him if he had any books or papers of Kasiram Mitra relating to the Company's

296 *Ibid*, para. 190.
297 *Ibid.*

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affairs at Patna. Mr. Cole replied that he had nothing in his possession and that all such books and papers, except those which belonged to himself and his private affairs, had been taken out of the chests. But the Council informed the supervisors that they should settle the merchants' and the *assamies'* accounts in the best manner possible although little could be expected, because it thought that "to prevent any after claims and demands on.....(the Company) it was highly necessary these Accounts should be adjusted and Acknowledgements taken for their balances."[298] The supervisors again informed the Council on 19th December that the "task of adjusting the Merchants Accounts appears to them altogether impracticable."[299] About the same time Mr. Jackson informed the Council through his letter, dated 26th December, that as soon as the saltpetre boats had left Punerak, Omichand was asked to come and settle his accounts ; he at first deferred it till the arrival of his *gomasta* from Chuprah but came afterwards to the English factory on 25th December for settling his accounts though his *gomasta* had not then arrived. Mr. Jackson was himself ready to act jointly with Mr. Barwell in settling the accounts but the latter did not like to interfere in the matter.[300]

298 *Ibid*, para. 191.
299 *Ibid*, para. 192.
300 *Ibid*, para. 194.

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The affairs of the Patna factory engaged the serious attention of the Council in the same month. The supervisors repeated their opinion that it was absolutely impossible to settle the merchants' and the *assamies'* accounts there, and that receipts could not be procured from them without spending money at the Nawab's *darbar*, and that little or nothing could be recovered from the debtors. So the Council decided that " should the (Nawab's) Government interfere in settling those Accompts (accounts) or should Omichand, Deepchand make any application to the Durbar or fly off from a fair and Mercantile adjustment it would be then time enough to desist from any further procedure," and informed the supervisors to that effect.[301]

Early in 1747 Mr. Barwell was removed from the chiefship of the Patna factory and Mr. Jackson was appointed in his place.[302] The Patna factory was mainly concerned with the saltpetre business and also with adjusting the accounts of Omichand, Deepchand and other merchants. Omichand desisted from settling his accounts and proposed to refer these to the arbitration of the merchants and shroffs there. When the supervisors referred the matter to the members of the Council in Calcutta through their letter of 7th February, 1747, the latter regarded it as a " wholly unprecedented "

301 *Ibid*, para. 195.

302 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748.

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method. They argued that the Company could by no means submit its affairs to be "arbitrated by the subjects of this country,"[303] as, in their opinion, according to the Firman (of 1716-17), all merchants dealing with the Company were required to settle their accounts in the Company's factory and the government of the country was thereby "ordered to compell the merchants to do so."[304] The Council ordered the supervisors through their letter to them, dated 3rd March, 1747, to "endevour to bring Omichand Deepchand to comply therewith, which should they refuse, they must apply to the Government to oblige them thereto," and also sent two letters from the President of the Council, one to Nawab Allahvardi and the other to Haji Ahmad which they were asked to deliver if they could expect any benefit from that. Immediately after the receipt of this letter, Omichand was called before the supervisors on 14th March but they could not prevail upon him to settle his accounts. About applying to the Nawab's government, as suggested by the Council, the supervisors dreaded many ill consequences from that step. They apprehended that "it would first be a means of Omichand's gaining his Point by an order from the Government for on application formerly made to them about some other merchants, accounts, the Nabob immediately ordered

303 *Ibid*, para. 250.

304 *Ibid*.

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arbitrators to decide them which is the usual step in the present case.....For daily experience shows that no good Issue can be expected unless attended with proper presents which is always the first Introduction and which they imagined from what they had observed there will not be spared by their antagonists. That we (they) well knew what slight obedience the Nabobs pay to the present (imperial) Government and therefore it might be presumed little benefit would accrue from their mentioning King Furruckseer's Phirmaund." [305] Notwithstanding these reasons, the Council in Calcutta again wrote to the supervisors at Patna on 24th April to approach the Nawab's government unless they were well assured by their personal knowledge on the spot that it would be of great disadvantage to the Company's affairs.[306]

Omichand and Deepchand proposed to send down their *gomasta* Makum Singh to Calcutta for settling the accounts. Makum Singh proceeded up to Hugli from which place he sent a letter to the President of the Council in Calcutta desiring to know from him if he could come to Calcutta with safety. The President, with the opinion of the majority in the Council, replied to him enquiring about the object of his visit to

305 *Ibid*, para. 251.
306 *Ibid*, para. 252.

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Calcutta. For want of papers or proofs in Calcutta no settlement of the accounts could be effected there.[307] On 28th October the gentlemen at the Patna factory sent to Calcutta the papers of the factory closed up to the 30th April by which there appeared " wrote off in the Profit and Loss Article one hundred and ten thousand, 1,10,000 rupees.[308] On 17th November the Council appointed Messrs. Jackson, Dawson and Eyre " to dissect the Profit and Loss Article of any three preceding years since 1735 in order to form a judgement how this Difference arises." [309] After having duly weighed all affairs concerning the Patna factory, the majority of the Council decided on the same day that " the Gentlemen at Patna should hold themselves in readiness for withdrawing their Factory some time in January next " in case the Court of Directors did not make any alteration in their previous orders for that purpose.[310]

The Patna factory remained in a distressed condition throughout the year 1748 owing to the ravages committed by the rebellious Afghan generals of the Nawab.[311] The English withdrew their

307 *Ibid*, paras. 252 and 253.

308 *Ibid*, para. 259.

309 *Ibid*, para. 250.

310 *Ibid*, para. 255.

311 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 56 ; Consultations, June 1748.

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factory from Patna in or about the year 1750.[312] Mr. Holwell put a motion in the Council in Calcutta in the month of February, 1753[313] for reconsidering the establishment of the Patna factory and the Court of Directors wrote to the Council in their letter, dated 31st January, 1755, to take this matter into consideration. About the middle of the year 1757, Mr. Watts procured a *parwanah* from the Nawab for re-establishing the factory at Patna without any additional payment to his officers and Mr. Pearkes was accordingly sent there.[314]

Dacca.

About the beginning of the year 1741, the Dacca factory was permitted by the Council in Calcutta to build godowns at a cost of 8,000 rupees.[315] Mr. John Gumley being appointed Chief of that factory on the death of Mr. William Bucknall, proceeded there on the 10th of August.[316] Various kinds of cloths were sent by the Company to the Dacca factory for flowering these on, and women were employed for such work. When in the year 1741 the Council in Calcutta wrote to the Dacca factory "to get the flowered and stitched cloths finished,"[317]

312 Grose's *Voyage, etc.*, Vol. II, pp. 639-42.
313 Consultations, 22nd February, 1753.
314 Letter to Court, 20th August, 1757.
315 Letter to Court, 19th Feb., 1741, para. 22.
316 Letter to Court, 26th July, 1741, para. 6.
317 Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, para. 114.

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the men of that factory finding it impossible to get that work finished by the women employed in that factory contracted with the *russagars* (darners ; darn = mend by interweaving yarn with needle across hole), " who gave ' *mutchulkas* ' (written bonds) to be answerable for any damage from the cloth being torn or split." [318] The gentlemen at that factory then promised to send a good quantity of flowered cloths if they were granted one year's time like those in the French factory there, and the authorities in Calcutta sent to them on 19th November 4 bales of *mulmuls* and 7 bales of *dooreas* for flowering these on.[319] They also " contracted for Puttan goods " according to the list of investment but on complaining that " goods were extravagant Dear" were directed (by the Council) to "go on in the best and cheapest manner." [320]

In the month of August 1742, the Dacca factory agreed to send 300 pieces of *nainsooks* and 200 *seerhandconnaes* but noted that *jamdanies* were not available there.[321] The authorities in Calcutta sent to Dacca on 4th October *hummums* (*hamams*) for flowering these on.[322] High price of cotton and dearness of provisions [323]

318 *Ibid*, para. 105. 319 *Ibid*, para. 116.

320 Letter to Court, 8th January, 1742.

321 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 61.

322 *Ibid*, para. 62.

323 Cotton was being sold at 33 rupees per maund and rice of the most inferior quality at 30 seers per rupee.

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greatly enhanced the prices of some articles, and their quality also deteriorated, particularly of the lower sorts from Dacca. In the year 1744 the Calcutta Council " sent '*cossajura doreas*' (striped silk cloths manufactured at Kasijora in the Midnapur district) to be flowered at Dacca." There goods had been contracted by the English at last year's prices, but as the Pathans, the Mughals and the Armenians purchased there '*tanjeebs*' and '*mulmulls*' at any prices, the men of the English factory experienced great difficulties in procuring these goods.[324] In the next year thirteen bales of *cossajura mulmulls* and *hummums* were sent to Dacca for flowering [325] and on 25th October the factory there advanced Rs. 20,000 for *pattan* goods.[326] A fire at Dacca consumed the Company's timbers and stores. Mr. Feake was sent there on 18th March, and William Wagan on 26th September.[327]

The Chief of the Dacca factory informed the Council in Calcutta on 21st November, 1746, about the " Mugs being very troublesome between that place and Bakergunge and that they had plundered some Boats belonging to the English," and prayed for additional military help to be sent with

324 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 19.
325 Letter to Court, 31st January, 1746, para. 39.
326 *Ibid*, para. 49.
327 *Ibid*, paras. 88-89.

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the boats, which were needed for despatching a large quantity of goods then lying ready at the factory. He also requested for a supply of money as soon as possible as there was no cash in his factory and he could get no credit. The Council replied on 4th December next that it had appointed an Ensign and twenty-four men to proceed to Dacca in order to bring the goods deposited there, and that the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory had received orders to send them a lac of rupees, which they were to expect by a bill on Fatehchand's house but that in the meantime he might draw on the Council for twenty thousand rupees if his necessity was urgent.[328] The gentlemen at the Dacca factory received a bill of exchange from the Chief and Council of Cassimbazar for 1,00,000 sicca rupees, out of which they sent 50 thousand rupees to the Jugdea factory according to the orders of the Council.[329]

They sent to the Council in Calcutta towards the beginning of 1747 forty-three bales (of cloth) and a bundle of *musters*. The time when Mahatabchand and other shroffs (bankers) were to demand the interest due on the money borrowed from them was drawing near ; but the Dacca factory had no money to clear off the same, and so they solicited the directions of the Council through their letter of 4th March as to how they should act when the

328 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 72.
329 *Ibid*, para. 76.

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shroffs would put forth their demands.[330] On 16th March, the Council sent to them 7 chests of treasure, and 15 bales of '*dooreas*' and 3 bales of '*humums*' (thick cloths used as wrappers in the cold season) for flowering, and at the same time directed them that if the shroffs demanded the interest money then they must endeavour to renew the handnotes till they could be supplied from Calcutta with money sufficient to pay them off.[331] On 11th April the Council sent to the Dacca factory six chests of treasure and a bundle of velvets.[332] In the meanwhile the *gomastas* of the Seths exerted great pressure for money and so the gentlemen at the Dacca factory deferred sending Rs. 40,000 to the Jugdea factory till they received the Council's opinion. On 25th April the Council ordered them to pay off the Seths with the money which they had already received and to supply the Jugdea factory with the promised sum as soon as they received Rs. 60,000 which had been despatched to them from Calcutta on 11th April.[333] Again on 16th and 25th July they wrote to the Council " complaining that if money be not soon sent them, they should be able to make but a small investment and have no ' *Puttun Goods* ' and that they could take no money there or at least under

330 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 64.
331 *Ibid*, para. 65.
332 *Ibid*, para. 67.
333 *Ibid*, para. 68.

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12 per cent. which if we (the Council) approved of giving they would try what sums could be had." [334] The Council wrote to the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory to help the gentlemen at the Dacca factory with money from Jagat Seth's house [335] and by about the 3rd week of August the former received from the Cassimbazar factory a note on Jagat Seth's house for 25,000 sicca rupees which also, as they complained in their letter to the Council of 23rd August, was to be of little use for providing their investments.[336] On 15th November they represented to the Council their inability "to proceed in their investment, not having where-withal to defray their monthly expenses, no one being willing to lend them one Rupee as the Company's ships were not arrived with treasure." [337]

On 16th March, 1748, they acknowledged the receipt of Rs. 50,000 from the Cassimbazar factory and informed the Council that they had drawn the following bills on the Company in favour of Neamat Uttuk for Rs. 1,500, in favour of Kishan Chand Datta Rs. 1,750, in favour of Lakshmi-Kanta Datta Rs. 750, in favour of Ramprasad Ghose Rs. 500.[338] On 16th April the Council in

334 *Ibid*, para. 71.
335 *Ibid*, para. 72.
336 *Ibid*, para. 73.
337 *Ibid*, para. 76.
338 Consultations, March 1748.

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Calcutta sent them 214 pieces of *dooreas* and *mulmulls* for flowering these on and also 8 chests of bullion.[339] They disposed of this bullion by the middle of June, and we find that by the middle of July their "business was at a stand-still for want of money."[340] On 22nd September the Council ordered them "to get down their flowered Goods by the last of October for the dispatch of the Swallow Sloop."[341] According to the orders of the Court of Directors, Mr. Nicholas Clerimbault took over charge of the Dacca factory in 1749 from Mr. Thomas Feake, who was taken into the Calcutta Council.[342] That factory remained in the same critical situation as in the last year, and the gentlemen there wrote to the Council that it was a "great favour that they procure common subsistence.[343]

The articles supplied by the Dacca Factory in the year 1751 proved to be of bad quality. On 14th September, 1752, Mr. Nicholas Clerimbault wrote a letter to the Council in Calcutta containing his answers to the several remarks on their investments of 1751. He pointed out therein that on account of the "emulation of the French lately

339 Letter to Court 19th November, 1748, paras. 69 and 70.

340 *Ibid*, paras. 72 and 73.

341 *Ibid*, para. 74.

342 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749, para. 24.

343 Leter to Court, 11th February, 1749.

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settled (there),[343a] and that the country cotton has continued at an extravagant high price for near three years past, they have been obliged to be less severe in prizing the fine cloth of all sorts and have been necessitated to take more the lower letters of the fine cloth than they should have done to prevent the Company being disappointed in quantity ordered." He further promised to transmit to Calcutta his "reasons either for sending but a part of several articles entirely or sending more of other than are ordered, and in relation to the *Alliballies*, the deficiency of the fine and overflow of super-fine was occasioned by the *Dellolls* and *Picars* being deficient in the former, and in lieu bringing in an overflow of the latter, which had they not accepted of must have left them considerably more indebted to the Company that they thought prudent."[344] Towards the end of October, the Council in Calcutta thought of sending 50 chests of Arcot rupees to the gentlemen at the Dacca factory to enable them not only to discharge the Company's debts to the Seths but also to complete their investments for that and the following season.[345] About the month of October,

[343a] It is clear from some French records that the French also were very active in collecting investments in those parts. *Vide* letters from the Chandernagore Council to M. Albert, Commissioner of the French Company at Jugdea, during 1750 and 1751 A.D., published in Correspondence Chandernagore, etc., pp. 399-422.

[344] Consultations, 25th September, 1752.

[345] Consultations, 30th October, 1752.

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the Dacca *dalals* secured a *parawanah* from the Nawab for having the "cloth business of Jugdea and all the Dacca Aurungs in their own hands."[346] The Dacca factory sent to Calcutta 112 bundles of cloth and 1 bundle of *musters* under the care of Sergeant Damy Davy[347] on 26th October, 76 bales and a bundle of muster on 11th December.[348]

They sent a parcel of cloths to Calcutta on 25th February, 1753. But the members of the Council in Calcutta, who had already informed them that they would despatch the 'Oxford' by the end of February, were highly enraged for the delay in sending the goods and also because the cloths had not been properly dressed. They, therefore, sent these back to Dacca after a few days and also sent there 20 chests of treasure for providing investments.[349] The principal *dalals* and *pykers* of the Company at Dacca refused to contract for the Chandpur cloths (which the Court of Directors wanted in large quantity) on the *musters* sent by the Council in Calcutta to the gentlemen at the Dacca factory, but they agreed to bring cloths on different *musters* from Chandpur. The *musters* for the latter kind of cloths with fixed

346 Consultations, 23rd October, 1752.
347 Consultations, 16th November, 1752.
348 Consultations, 27th December, 1752.
349 Letter to Court, 4th January, 1754, para. 77.

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prices marked on them were sent to the Council by the gentlemen at the Dacca factory on 10th June.[350] They also informed the Council that they were trying to bring down the price of cloths purchased for ready money " in which they met with some success, but by that means the cloth came in exceeding slow the Dellols and the Picars having taken back great quantities on account of the low prices at which they had rated." [351] On 23rd June the Council in Calcutta inspected the *musters* of Chandpur cloths sent to Calcutta by the gentlemen at Dacca and informed the latter that these were inferior to the *musters* which they had sent to Dacca, and that "cloth might be cheaper bought, and the quality better preserved if one of their Council were sent to Chandpur to purchase it on the spot besides the advantage it would receive by being washed and dressed at the Aurung itself." [352] The Dacca factors sent to Calcutta 87 bales of cloth on 6th September [353] and 49 bales of cloth on 10th October. The latter were inspected on 12th November by the members of the Council in Calcutta, who found that these " were very ill-sorted (and that there was) too great a difference from outside

[350] *Ibid*, para. 84.
[351] *Ibid*, para. 86.
[352] *Ibid*, para. 87.
[353] *Ibid*, para. 90.

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folds to the inside ones. The *Baftas* in particular were very badly dressed the inside Folds very thin and the Fabricks very bad." [354] They, therefore, directed the Dacca factors not to procure those cloths unless they could remedy the above defects. They also noted that "the flowered work in general was worked with too coarse a thread, the flowers very indifferently worked and the inside one extremely bad. The *Tanjeebs* and *Terrendams* have a greater difference than usual between the inside and outside Folds and the coarse threads were not well packed out." [355] They, therefore, directed the gentlemen at the Dacca factory "to be more careful in the Provision of their Investment for the future, and that the complaints of the flowered goods should be obviated, particularly that of working the flowers with a coarse thread."

In the next year seventeen chests of Arcot rupees and 10 chests of bullion were sent to Dacca for investments. As the goods from the Dacca factory for the last two or three years had been very bad, so the Council in Calcutta sent to the gentlemen there on 25th April some *musters* for comparing these with their own goods in order to be careful for the future.[356]

We have already noted the distressed condition of the Dacca factory during the Company's

354 *Ibid*, para. 93.

355 *Ibid*.

356 Letter to Court, 9th September, 1754, para. 83.

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quarrels with Nawab Sirajuddowla. In the year 1762, that factory anticipated some troubles, as we find in the following:—"The various rumours that prevail in the country and the general insolence of the natives with the interruption put upon trade in general giving us reason to suspect that we shall be engaged in troubles when the season shall permit of carrying on operation in the field, it has been agreed to put the Dacca factory in a state of defence and get sepoys from Chittagong." These troubles actually came in 1763 when that factory was attacked by a body of sepoys and Mr. Leycester, chief of the factory, left it.[357] The conduct of Mr. Leycester was severely stigmatised by the authorities in Calcutta and Clive noted on 29th January, 1766:—"Mr. Leycester's behaviour at Dacca when he abandoned the Factory which commanded a very considerable proportion of the Company's treasure and merchandise would in all probability have lost him the service, if General Carnac had not prevailed upon Mr. Vansittart to let him soften the paragraph written upon the subject in the General letter."[358] During the year 1764 Dacca was subjected to the ravages of the dacoits (robbers) and the properties of Mr. Ross were also

357 Consultations, 16th February, 1764.

358 Consultations, 29th January, 1766.

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plundered. But the Nawab of Bengal "ordered Mr. Reza Khan to recover his losses and directed him to call upon the assistance of the Dacca Factory for some sepoys to go in armed boats and endeavour to discover and root out the dacoits." In the year 1761, Mr. Verelst, chief of the Chittagong factory, had applied to the chief of the Dacca factory for ammunition.[359] The gentlemen at the Dacca factory informed the Council in Calcutta on 9th February, 1764, that "they had despatched Captain Grant to Islamabad with 4 companies of sepoys, Two guns, and an Howitzer giving him directions at the same time to co-operate with the Nabob's troops in reducing the Bambapore Zaminder. That Mr. Cartier had been advised by Mr. Grant that the Zaminder had abandoned the Kella on his bringing his Troops before it which it did not lay in his power to prevent not having a sufficient number of Men to invest the place and that he was then employed in seeing the works levelled. That they have now left at the Factory Lieut. Dow, one sergeant, and three companies of sepoys and that their military stores of every kind being much reduced by the quantities returned to Islamabad with Captain Grant."[360] The cloth factory at Santipur had also some troubles in the year 1764, as is clear from the letter, dated 6th November,

Santipur Factory.

359 Chittagong District Records, Vol. I, p. 8.

360 Bengal Secret Consultations, 13th February, 1764.

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1764, sent from the gentlemen there to the Council in Calcutta :—" Ramchandra Shah, the son of Krishnachandra Shah, arrived in the Aurung with two or three hundred horsemen, sepoys and Peons ; about 50 persons entered our factory, and insisted on our going with them to Ramchandra Shah ; and finding that we refused to go, they forcibly took away Manohar Bhattacharyya, our Gomastha, who provides cotton yarn for the Company, whereby the Company's business is stopped ; therefore, as we cannot perceive their design in the present disorder, we despatch Haidiram Mukherji and Gopal Bhattacharyya to inform you of the particulars, and hope you will take notice of the same." [361]

Jugdea Factory.

At the beginning of the year 1741 the Jugdea factory received 60,000 Arcot rupees from the Council in Calcutta along with a list of investments to be collected there.[362] But the high price of cotton and dearness of provisions affected that factory ; it was not able to send to Calcutta in 1742 white *Bully Baftas* (a kind of silk cloth) at all and could send only 3,810 pieces of brown '*baftas*' of which 240 pieces were returned as being too thin. On 30th September, 1742, ten Europeans were sent from Calcutta to Jugdea, as the

361 Calcutta Review, 1872, pp. 110-11.

362 Letter to Court, 19th February, 1761, para. 18.

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factory there had been attacked by the Mugs.[363] In the year 1744 the gentlemen at the factory promised to procure piece-goods on cheap and secure terms but the *dalals* there "could not undertake to provide a full quantity of "*Bully Baftas*' as first crop of cotton (was) almost spoiled by Hail."[364] In the next year that factory was directed by the Council in Calcutta to advance only small sums at a time to the *dalals* and to send peons to the *aurungs* to prevent the misuse of the sums. On 10th May, the chief of the said factory informed the Calcutta Council that the *dalals* had brought in goods of the value of Rs. 7,006-12-6 on account of their balances, which reduced their balances to Rs. 68,846-11-3 and that they offered to enter into an obligation to pay Rs. 10,000 every year. The Calcutta Council approved of this.[365] Mr. Charles Hampton went there on 8th April.[366]

On 22nd February, 1745, the Council in Calcutta sent to the Jugdea Factory 50000 Arcot rupees for beginning their investments. On the 5th of April the chief of the Jugdea factory wrote to the Council asking for another supply of Rs. 50,000 which was forwarded to him on 1st May next since when the Council received from

363 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 85. The French at Jugdea also apprehended similar incursions of the Mugs during the years 1750 and 1751, Correspondence Chandernagore, etc., pp. 397-99 and 410-11.

364 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 21.

365 Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745, para. 13.

366 *Ibid*, paras. 88-89.

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there 652 bundles of cloth amounting to Rs. 54,968-4-0. On 15th May, the Council received a letter from Mr. Humphry Bellamy, Chief at Jugdea, dated 28th April, along with a copy of the accounts of that factory up to 31st March. It was noted in the accounts that out of the old balance of *dasmasa* rupees (fifty-nine thousand six hundred and eighty and six pice) due from the *dalals*, they had paid *dasmasa* rupees nine thousand one hundred and sixty-six ten annas and nine pice, goods of the value of which was forwarded to Calcutta, and that they had promised to pay eight hundred and thirty-three rupees five annas three pice by the end of April, which was to "make up the ten thousand rupees agreeable to their contract." [367] In their letter, dated 9th October, 1746, the gentlemen there desired "a further supply of 60,000 Rupees to be sent them" as the *dalals* had promised to deliver up to that amount for that year's shipping.[368] On 29th October the Council replied to them that according to their desire it had ordered the gentlemen at the Dacca factory "to supply them with 50,000 rupees as soon as it comes to their hands from Cassimbazar and directed them to keep strictly.....(the) orders of the home in not advancing money for Goods but to pay for them as they were brought into the

367 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 67.

368 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 20.

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House."[369] In the month of December, the Council received from the Jugdea factory 3,099 pieces of Chandpur *baftas*, which being duly packed was sent to England.[370]

At the beginning of the year 1747 the gentlemen at the Jugdea factory wrote to the Council in Calcutta for money in order to carry on their investments. The articles sent from the Jugdea factory could be purchased at a much higher price in Calcutta ; so the Council agreed on 3rd March to send 60,000 sicca rupees to the gentlemen at the Dacca factory in response to their separate request, "with orders to send Current Rupees 40,000 to Jugdea if to be had otherwise such Rupees to that amount as were most proper and keep the remainder for their own occasions."[371] At the same time the Council sent the list of investments to the gentlemen at the Jugdea factory and "ordered them to begin and provide goods for ready money, expressly forbidding them the advancing any on *Dadney*."[372] On 23rd March the Council acknowledged the receipt of a letter and of 175 bales of *baftas* (a kind of mixed silk and cotton cloth) from Jugdea and sent there a new list of investments.[373] Mr. Thomas Bellamy was appointed

369 *Ibid*, para. 21.

370 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 73.

371 Letter to Court, 10th February, 1748, para. 55.

372 *Ibid*.

373 *Ibid*, para. 56.

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a member of the Jugdea factory in place of Mr. Paul Richards Pearkes who had been transferred to Dacca because of the death of Mr. John Smith, a member in that factory. By the end of May the gentlemen at the Jugdea factory were able to realise Rs. 10,000 of the old debts from the merchants. But the *dalals* there expressed their inability to transact business "in any other Method than has been practised two years before, which has been by advancing money in small sums and they humbly petition this method may be continued otherwise they should be compelled to seek some other protection." [374] The Council had at last to submit to this but it directed the gentlemen at the Jugdea factory through their letter, dated 10th June, "to beware to have the goods for the money they advanced, All or near all in before they advanced any fresh sums." [375] The gentlemen at the Jugdea factory sent to Calcutta 116 bundles of cloth on 30th April and 53 bundles on 18th June, and in their letter to the Council, dated 4th July, they acknowledged the receipt of 4,000 Arcot rupees from Dacca. In another letter, dated 7th July, they noted that they had advanced Rs. 2,000 for *gurrahs* to be made of coarser and rounder thread and that they would be able to provide 25,000 pieces of that sortment, to make an increase in the quantity of *baftas* and to

374 *Ibid.*

375 *Ibid*, para. 58.

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make an investment to the amount of Rs. 5,00,000 if they were supplied with 1 lac or 1½ lacs of rupees when the Company's ship would arrive.[376] They also informed that they would "pay strict obedience to the directions and orders" contained in the Council's letter of 10th June. Six chests of bullion were sent by the Council in Calcutta to the gentlemen at the Jugdea factory on 14th April, 1748, and on 14th August they were directed to send down all the brown cloth they had made ready for chinting.[377] Both the Dacca and the Jugdea factories were at that time exposed to the depredations of the Mugs from Arracan and Chittagong.[378]

In the next year the gentlemen at the Jugdea factory sent 133 bundles of brown cloth and 3 *tucktaes* (taktis) of white cloth which reached Calcutta on 12th July.[379] On the retirement of Mr. James Blackford and Mr. Thomas Bellamy, Mr. William Baillie was appointed as the chief and Mr. Charles Stafford Playdell his second in that factory.[380] By the year 1751 the gentlemen at that factory were able to encourage the weavers to establish a new *aurung* "by which

376 *Ibid*, para. 60.

377 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, paras. 75 and 76.

378 Letter to Court, 27th January, 1749, para. 10.

379 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749, para. 24.

380 *Ibid.*

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means their business was a good deal expedited and they had increased the Investment 30,000 rupees more than it has ever been there having in that time invested about two Laack of Rupees." [381]

But they were suffering various inconveniences from the "ruined circumstances" of their *dalals*, no one of whom (of any credit) being ready to undertake the management of the Company's business unless their factory was removed to another place. So on 27th August, 1752, they recommended that point to the consideration of the members of the Council in Calcutta.[382] On 27th September the latter received 90 bundles and 5 *tucktaes* of cloth from that factory [383] and sent there eight chests of Arcot rupees on 2nd October.[384] The investments received from the Jugdea factory in 1752 were inferior in quality to those of the former years, particularly the *baftas*. The members of the Council in Calcutta, while examining those goods, noticed a great difference in sorting them and therefore sent back 925 pieces, which were damaged and much torn, to the gentlemen there for inspection and at the same time sent them strict orders to be particular in sorting the goods and also in returning to the *dalals* all

381 Letter to Court, 2nd January, 1752, para. 51.
382 Consultations, 25th September, 1752.
383 Consultations, 28th September, 1752.
384 Consultations, 23rd October, 1752.

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such pieces as were not agreeable to *musters*.[385] About the removal of the factory they wrote to the gentlemen there to consult those at the Dacca factory about it and to be careful about not incurring thereby heavy expenses for the Company. Accordingly Mr. Playdell went from Jugdea to Dacca. The gentlemen at the Jugdea factory wanted to remove their factory to Mutlubgunge while those at Dacca preferred Collinda[386] as the latter place was "a considerable mart for *Baftaes*, about five hours' distance from Jugdea and situated in the midst of their cloth Aurungs."[387] The gentlemen at the Dacca factory wrote to the Council in Calcutta on 17th October that the removal of the Jugdea factory to Mutlubgunge which was within a day's journey from Dacca "must greatly prejudice and obstruct their investment, make the goods much dearer and expose the Hon'ble Company to a very great additional and unnecessary charge; that as Mutlubgunge is so considerably distant from Jugdea and the other Baftae aurungs, they can as easily provide those goods from Dacca as any set of gentlemen could do from Mutlubgunge and with this advantage at a very trifling charge without risking the extortions of a Durbar.....That among other inconveniences which would attend

385 Consultations, 30th October, 1752.

386 *Ibid.*

387 Consultations, 23rd October, 1752.

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setting this new factory, it would occasion a rise in the price of cloth provided for the Company at Dacca, as they have experienced within these few years from a French gentleman having settled at Serampore near Chandpore which has occasioned a considerable advance in the price of *dimities* and other cloths purchased at that and the neighbouring Aurungs" [388] According to the orders of the Council they recommended one Paramananda as a *dalal* to Mr. Baillie, who had come to Dacca from Jugdea in July. Towards the end of December, the gentlemen at the Dacca and the Jugdea factories, in concurrence with Paramananda *dalal*, agreed to transfer the Jugdea factory to Luckipur.[389] Paramananda declared that he would be able "with proper conveniences to carry on the Hon'ble Company's business of the Factory at this place" and that he would "enlarge its investment to four lacks of rupees annually." [390] The gentlemen at the Dacca factory requested the Council in Calcutta through their letter, dated the 1st of January, 1753, to apply to the Nawab of Murshidabad for their settling at Luckipur "in order that they may have no impediment from the (local) Government of Jugdea." [391]

388 Consultations, 23rd October, 1752.

389 Consultations, 8th January, 1753.

390 *Ibid.*

391 *Ibid.*

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On 28th October the gentlemen at the Jugdea factory tried to explain the defect in the quality of their investments by informing the Council of the "very extraordinary rise of cotton there that the value of their *baftaes* was increased about 20 per cent. beyond their general price, since which cotton has had no fall and rise which was then as usual at near two maunds for a rupee has rose to 25 seers, so that the manufacture of a piece of Jugdea cloth from two annas has rose to five annas. That these inconveniences occasion rise in their *baftaes* in the whole of the above 25 per cent. and as notwithstanding they have their cloth at its old price so the defect in quality will appear they hope as ought to be expected."[392] On 22nd November the Council in Calcutta received five *tucktaes* of cloth[393] and on 7th December 314 bales and 1 *tucktae* of cloth form Jugdea.[394] As the time for the incursions of the Mugs was drawing near, the gentlemen at the Jugdea factory requested the Council in Calcutta in their letter of 16th November "to order the pinnace to be with them by the end of next month for the safe conveyance of their cloth and a chest of good powder with a lattorn (lantern) or two."[395] Again

392 Consultations, dated 13th November, 1752.
393 Consultations, 27th November, 1752.
394 Consultations, 7th December, 1752.
395 Consultations, 4th December, 1752.

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in their letter, dated 3rd December, they requested the Council to permit them "a rise of 10 or 15 per cent. in the stated prices of their cloth" by which means they thought they would be able "to remedy that defect in it complained of by the Council for these eight or ten years past."[396] On 17th December Messrs. Baillie and Playdell wrote from Jugdea to the Council in Calcutta that they had selected a place near Ramnaut Colly (Kuli) for removing their factory, but the gentlemen at the Dacca factory wrote on 19th December that the said place was "unfit for a settlement there having so much of the land tore away by the waters" and that they preferred Luckipur, a place nearer Jugdea than Ramnaut Colly.[397]

Balasore factory and Bulrumgurry factory.

On 19th February, 1741, orders for investments were sent by the Council in Calcutta to the Balasore factory and also 13 soldiers to protect it.[398] The Company's Chief at that factory contracted for the full quantity as ordered in the list.[399] On 19th March of the same year the factory began proposals for contract, which continued till 26th March and at last a contract was made for "Cossaes Malda 40 and 2 at 21 Rupees

396 Consultations, 17th December, 1752.

397 Consultations, 28th December, 1752.

398 Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, para. 95.

399 *Ibid*, para. 107.

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8 Annaes (annas) and A (refers to the best sort) Cossaes Malda 40 and 2½ at 24 rupees the 'A' Cogmaria 40 and 2½ at 9 Rupees 2 Annaes the ('A')

Serry (sari) at 70 per Corge

Fine (sari) at 90

Orna 2¼ at 9·4 and 2 Ci(o)vid at 8·4 per piece."[400]

In the month of January, 1742, the Balasore factory received Rs. 24,000 from Calcutta along with the list of investments for that year. But the investments there suffered that year from dearness of provisions ; the weavers of that place could get rice at the rate of 10 seers per rupee.[401] There the "price of cowries broke at 33 pun for Madras rupee" owing to the arrival of two Maldavia (Maldive) ships on 12th September.[402] Mr. Feake, Chief of that factory, "had trouble with the (native) Government about one Huge Wynn falsely accused of Robbing the French Company, the Phousdar demanded Gunpowder or 50 maund saltpetre which was refused."[403] A Portuguese, who had taken shelter in that factory, was forcibly taken out by the native Government's faujdar, who also compelled Mr. Feake to pay him Rs. 1,300.[404] Being informed

400 *Ibid*, para. 99.
401 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 65
402 *Ibid*.
403 *Ibid*, para. 82.
404 *Ibid*, para. 83.

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of these the authorities in Calcutta sent there 12 soldiers in the month of November.[405] In spite of the various disturbances for the two following years, that factory continued to make contracts for goods with the merchants.[406] Mr. Henry Kelsall went as an assistant to the Balasore factory on 26th February, 1745. Mr. Heath, Chief of that factory, informed the Council on 16th May, 1745, that he had advanced Rs. 10,000 for cloths;[407] he had also contracted for 100 tons of cowries at 36 pun per rupee.[408]

On 4th March, 1746, the Council in Calcutta sent the list of investments for that year to the Balasore factory and also Rs. 30,000.[409] On the 5th of May, 1746, Mr. Heath wrote to the Council in Calcutta for sending down to him a party of twenty soldiers for the protection of the factory there against the "insolence of the country Government."[409a] His request was complied with on 22nd May. On the 11th of September next the Council received a letter from Mr. James Altham, who had succeeded Mr. Heath as chief of that factory, containing a request for a supply of Rs. 15,000 to purchase cowries and to meet the expenses

405 *Ibid*, para. 84.
406 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 22.
407 Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745, para. 14.
408 Letter to Court, 31st January, 1746, para. 50.
409 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 19.
409a Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 79.

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of the factory. Accordingly on 21st October, the Council sent to Balasore Rs. 5,000 more 'for the running charges of the factory.' As *Maldiva* cowries could be purchased in Calcutta at the rate of 38 *pun*[410] for a Madras rupee, which was "cheaper than what could be procured at Ballasore besides saving the risque (risk) of them," the Council agreed to purchase the 25 tons of cowries ordered in Calcutta at that price and forbade Mr. Altham to purchase these at Balasore.[411]

Mr. Heath, after coming back from Patna on account of ill health, again took charge of the Balasore factory from Mr. James Altham according to the orders of the Calcutta Council of 21st January, 1747.[412] On 21st March, the Council in Calcutta directed Mr. Heath "to provide as many Goods as possible without advancing Dadney.[413] On 1st August Mr. Heath wrote to the Council asking for a supply of money to carry on the investments there. The Council permitted him to draw there a bill on the Company, and so he drew 8,000 Madras rupees in favour of one Bhagabat Pal.[414] The Council also sent back to him 27 bales

410 "A sum of eighty *Kauri* shells, equal to twenty *gundas*, and of which sixteen are equal to a Kahan."—Wilson's Glossary, p. 393.

411 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 19.

412 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 168.

413 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 162.

414 *Ibid*, paras, 166 and 169.

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of brown cloth, which had been received that year from that factory but which could not be properly whitened and dressed in Calcutta, with directions to get these whitened at Balasore and then to send these back to the Council in proper time.[415] He promised to do that in his letter to the Council, dated 5th October.[416] But he retired soon from the Chiefship of that factory and Mr. Kelsall was appointed in his place in the month of December. On 31st March, 1748, 1 chest of bullion was sent to Mr. Kelsall at Balasore, but the latter wrote for a fresh supply of money on 15th September whereupon the Council forwarded to him 4,000 Arcot rupees on 3rd October.

On 20th March, 1749, the Council in Calcutta sent the list of goods to be provided that year at Balasore to Mr. Henry Kelsall "with orders to comply therewith as near as possible and at the same time sent him a chest of Rupees."[417] But the factories at Balasore and Bulrumgurry were subject to frequent harassments at the hands of the Maratha invaders and could not collect investments up to any satisfactory quantity. In the year 1754 a large balance, exclusive of what had been advanced for *sannoes* to the *gomastas* at the Chumra *aurung*, remained in cash at the Bulrumgurry

415 *Ibid*, paras. 166 and 167.

416 *Ibid*, para. 169.

417 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749, para. 22.

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factory. The Council in Calcutta asked Mr. McGuire, Chief of that factory, on 11th March, to make a "catalogue of what quantity of goods ordered in the list of Investment he could provide," and to return to Calcutta "the surplus reserving no more than sufficient for such a provision." The Council also noted that the Olmorra goods sent from that factory to Calcutta did not answer the expectations of the members. Mr. McGuire replied on 30th March that "he contracted with the weavers for the whole of the *sannoes* Investment which amounted to Rs. 30,000" and that he was extremely sorry for the badness of the Olmorra goods, which was due to the fact that "the country round about having been infested with Marattoes the last year prevented him from inspecting into the manufactures there in person agreeable to his Intentions which he proposed to do this season as the Marattoes had left the province and should set out for that Aurung the next day" where he would wait for the orders of the Council to know if he will contract for *chucklaes piniascoes* and *ginghams*[418] upon last year's musters. In the year 1760 "four or five hundred Mahrattas were arrived at Balasore and had action with Meer Abdulram Khan, the

[418] "A kind of stuff described in Draper's Dictionary, as made from cotton yarn dyed before being woven. The Indian ginghams were apparently sometimes of cotton mixt with some other material."—Hobson-Jobson, p. 287.

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Phousdar there; on both sides many men were slain and wounded, and Meer Abdulram Khan was made prisoner and carried away. The President of the Calcutta Council thereupon sent 3 companies of sepoys to Midnapur "to reconnoitre the roads."[419]

[419] Long, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 239.

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CHAPTER III

Commercial Relations

Section I.—*Asiatic and Inter-Provincial Trade of Bengal in the Mid-Eighteenth Century.*

"Bengal from the mildness of its climate, the fertility of its soil, and the natural history of the Hindoos, was always remarkable for its commerce."[1] Grose remarks that "the trade of Bengal supplied rich cargoes for fifty or sixty ships yearly."[2] She carried on a vigorous trade with the other Asiatic countries, and according to Dow, during the first half of the 18th century, "the balance of trade was against all nations in favour of Bengal; and it was the sink where gold and silver disappeared without the least prospect of return."[3] The exports of Bengal to the Gulfs of Persia and Arabia were very great and she supplied Arabia, Persia, Turkey, Georgia, Armenia and "the lesser Asia" with her manufactures and brought

(1) Asiatic.

Vigorous Asiatic trade in the mid-eighteenth century;

Exports of Bengal to the Asiatic countries sent in large quantities;

[1] Dow's *Hindoostan*, Vol. I, ciii.

[2] *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. II, p. 238.

[3] *Op. cit.* Taylor, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Cotton Manufacture at Dacca*, p. 66.

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home annually coffers of gold.[4] She had also a flourishing trade with the Eastern Kingdoms of Asia, the Malayan and Philippine islands.[5]

A flourishing trade with the Malayan and Philippine islands.

At least down to the year 1756 "the coasts of Coramondel and Malabar, the gulf of Persia and Red Sea, nay even Manilla, China and the coast of Africa were obliged to Bengal for taking off their cotton,[6] pepper, drugs, fruits, chank, cowries, tin, etc., as on the other hand they were supplied from Bengal with what they could not well be without, such as raw silk and its various manufactures, opium, vast quantities of cotton cloth, rice, ginger, turmeric, long pepper, etc., and all sorts of gruff goods."[7] Sugar was also one of the most

[4] "All the European companies formed their investments with money brought into the country; the Gulphs (the two Gulphs of Mocha and Persia) *poured in their treasures into this river* (Ganges), and across the continent, an inland trade was driven to the westward to the extremity of the Kingdom of Guzzerat."—Letter from the Select Committee to the Honourable the Court of Directors, dated Fort William, 26th Sept., 1767; *vide* Verelst's *View of Bengal*, Appendix, p. 59; Hill's *Bengal*, Vol. III, p. 216.

[5] Dow's *Hindoostan*, Vol. I, cii.

[6] It is important to note that Bengal had thus to import cotton from outside. Thus the native production of cotton (Rennel's *Journals*) was not sufficient for her extensive manufacture.

[7] Causes of the loss of Calcutta by David Rannie,

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important commodities of trade between Bengal and these different countries. Thus almost every year "number of Persians, Abyssinians, Arabs, Chinese, Guzrâts, Malabarians, Turks, Moors, Jews, Georgians, Armenians and merchants from all parts of Asia" poured into Bengal,[8] while Bengal also gave her products and manufactures to them.[9]

Trade with Kashmir and Tibet.

The Kashmiri merchants trading in Tibet had their agents stationed in Bengal and the principal articles of merchandise between Bengal and Tibet were "broadcloth, atter, skins, neel (indigo), pearls, coral, amber and other heads of chank, spices, tobacco, sugar, Malda striped sattins, and a few white cloths chiefly coarse; the returns are made in gold dust, musk and cow-tails."[10]

Hill's *Bengal in 1756-1757*, Vol. III, p. 390; Grose, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 235.

[8] Grose, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 234.

[9] Mr. Scrafton has expressed, 'till of late years inconceivable numbers of merchants from all parts of Asia in general as well as from the rest of Hindustan in particular, sometimes in bodies of many thousands at a time, used annually to resort to Bengal with little else than ready money or bills to purchase the produce of those provinces.'—Bolts, *Considerations on Indian Affairs*, p. 21.

[10] Memorandum by Mr. Bogle on the Trade of Tibet, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, June 1933.

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Various circumstances checked the progress of this commerce :

But a variety of political circumstances, affecting seriously the destinies and internal conditions of those different states, gradually checked the progress of this vigorous commerce. Dow has summarised the situation in the Asiatic countries in the following few lines :—

(a) Disorders and anarchy in the Asiatic countries ;

" Persia, about 30 years ago a great and flourishing empire, has been torn to pieces and almost depopulated by the cruelties of Nadir Shaw ; and since his assassination (1747 A.D.), by unremitting civil wars. The few inhabitants who escaped the rage of the sword sit down in the midst of poverty. Georgia and Armenia who shared in the troubles of Persia, shared also her untoward fate. Indigence has shut up the doors of commerce ; vanity has disappeared with wealth and men content themselves with the coarse manufacture of their native countries. The Turkish empire has long declined on its southern and eastern frontiers. Egypt rebelled : Babylonia, under its Basha, revolted. The distracted state of the former has almost shut up the trade by caravans, from Suez to Cairo ; from the latter of which, the manufactures of Bengal were conveyed by sea to all the ports of the Ottoman dominions. The rapacity of the Basha of Bagdad, which is increased by the necessity of keeping a great standing

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force to support his usurpation, has environed with terror the walls of Bussora, which circumstance has almost annihilated its commerce with Syria.... Trade is in a manner unknown ; the merchants of Bussorah are ruined; and there were, last year, in the warehouses of that city, of the manufactures of Bengal, to the value of two hundred thousand pounds, which could not be sold for half the prime cost."[11] The trade of Bengal with the kingdom and islands of eastern Asia was also on the decline, if it had not come to a standstill. The political crises and upheavals in Bengal had also some share in causing this decrease of her Asiatic commerce. No sooner had the storms of the Marattha invasions blown over her and the tactful Nawab Allahvardi had closed his eyes for ever, than she heard again the thundering of the cannon at Tanna's Fort, at Budgebudge in Calcutta, and on the field of Plassey. The victory of the English at Plassey brought her face to face with the difficult problem of adjusting herself to new circumstances, while it increased the prestige and power of the English trading company to a considerable degree. Both at home and abroad her commerce came to be entirely transferred into the hands of the Company's people.

(*b*) Political changes in Bengal.

Bengal's commerce under the control of the Company's people.

11 Dow's *Hindoostan*, Vol. I, pp. cxiv-cxvi.

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In 1758 some of the 'free merchants' in Calcutta sent a petition to Robert Clive, putting forth their grievances with regard to the trade in the Persian Gulf.[12] This trade was on the downward path,[13] which was due, as they argued, to the heavy imposition of port duties at Surat and Bussorah. In 1755 a ship had sold at Surat to the amount of Rs. 54,481 upon which the charges of merchandise (exclusive of commission and the ship's charges for ballast, water, etc.) were Rs. 6,390 which was nearly 12 per cent. of the produce ; Rs. 34,859 were invested upon which the export charges were Rs. 3,699. In 1754 some piecegoods were sent in a boat from Bushire to Bussorah ; they were sold for 95,736 '*Mamoodys*' upon which the charges of merchandise were 9,352 *Momoodys* or $9\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. and this exclusive of commission ; "but had

[12] Long, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-73.

[13] "Within these twenty years there has been from this port eight to ten sail of ships to Surat and three, four or five to Bussorah in one season (though the French at that time were trading largely to these ports as well as we) and for the first three years of Mr. Wake's Government at Bombay we are well informed that his Surat consulage of 2 per cent. amounted from thirty-eight to forty-three thousand Bombay rupees annually, whereas Mr. Bourchier does not now receive ten. One to two ships with a small stock filled up with Moor's freights being all that now goes to Surat and of ships that go into the gulf of Persia few make any sales at Gambroon or Bussorah."—*Ibid.*

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the goods been gruff or had the ship gone to Bussorah, the charges would have been greatly increased by the Bussorah's present house rent etc., expenses, pilotage, etc." The British traders were not thus able to stand in competition with the French or the Dutch, as the latter had not to pay such duties by 3 or 4 per cent. at Surat or 3 p.c. at Bussorah but had only to pay 3 p.c. to the Turks. Especially the Dutch traders had great advantages over the English traders. The Dutch had settled and made a free port of the Island of Carrack (about 30 leagues from Bussorah River) where the charges of merchandise were lower; and moreover, though they paid customs to the Turks, yet by "lumping with the country Government they scarcely payed 2 p.c. on imports, and as much upon exports, the whole about $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 p.c." The English traders, on the other hand, paid $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. export duty on rice, 2 per cent. on all other goods and 1 per cent. upon all imports; in all about $3\frac{1}{2}$ or $3\frac{3}{4}$ p.c.; the difference of $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. that the Dutch paid more than the English was "a trifle when compared to the great advantages they reap by their trade from Batavia in the valuable articles of sugar, arrack, timber, rattana, pepper, etc." Having all those arguments in their favour, the petitioners prayed that the following regulations might be passed,

Complaint of the "free merchants" in Calcutta against high duties for Asiatic trade and their petition for certain regulations.

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viz., that to trade to every Port in India where owners may choose to send their ships be free to all English vessels ; that no further restraints nor duties be laid on trade anywhere in India, on the contrary that duties be considerably lessened at Bombay, Surat and Bussorah for reasons already mentioned ; also that the 3 p.c. advance duty on Malabar pepper be taken off at Surat because the Hon'ble Company get not a grain of pepper more by it at Tellicherry, and it only prevents an Englishman from trading in an article that every Banyan trades in ; that proper encouragement may be given to retrieve the valuable manufacture of sugar, unaccountably lost in this place (which by causing a great export of rice, enhances the price of labour and consequently of all other gruff piece-goods and raw silk), particularly that no export nor import duties be levied upon Bengal sugar, at any English settlement for.....years. That due encouragement, be given for to manufacture sugar, arrack, etc. at Bengal for that place may soon be brought to rival Batavia and greatly increase trade. And lastly, that the following orders obtained from the Hon'ble Company many years ago (and since turned to the ruin of trade) be revoked, *viz*, the order that no person without permission from the President shall remain in the rainy season at Surat nor at any subordinate factory in India, except the Hon'ble Company's servants belonging to the

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Presidency under whose direction the subordinate is. The order for all captains and supercargos at Gambron to reside in the factory and sell their goods in presence of the chief. The order made lately at Bombay for no Englishman at Bussorah, etc., to apply to the country Government for recovery of debits, etc., but through the President." [14]

The Company established its enclusive right of exporting piece-goods to the Asiatic countries.

We do not know whether these regulations were ever passed, but gradually the British East India Company established its exclusive right of exporting piece-goods to the markets of Bussorah, Jidda, and Mocha. For the disposal of the goods of this joint concern, the Governor and Council of Calcutta fitted out ships generally known by the name of the 'freightships' on which the goods were first shipped, and the remainder of the tonnage was filled up on freight. All these affairs were managed by a member of the Council in Calcutta, who was "acting owner" and kept a warehouse for this purpose generally known in Calcutta by the name of 'freight warehouse.' Bolts has described the anomalies and abuses that this practice produced in the following language :—"Frequent instances have been known of the goods of private merchants, even Europeans, but particularly of those belonging to Armenians, Moguls, Gentoos, being in consequence of this

14 Long, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-72.

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monopoly, stopped on the public road, and by force carried to the freight warhouse and the proprietors of such goods have been obliged contrary to their wills to see their goods shipped on vessels they had not a good opinion of, and going on voyages whose destination and management were often contrary to their own private scheme of trade ; in consequence of which unwarrantable proceedings, those merchants have frequently lost their sales, have had their goods damaged...and have sometimes lost even the goods themselves." [15] In the absence of any other evidence, it is very difficult to say whether Bolts describes the actual state of things or merely gives vent to his vindictive and propaganda spirit. But this much can be accepted as certain that gradually the Asiatic trade of Bengal passed exclusively into the hands of the English Company.

Evils of this monopoly according to Bolts.

The different parts of India were commercially connected with one another from very remote times, and about the middle of the 18th Century, the commercial relations of Bengal with the other provinces were as active and vigorous as before. "A variety of merchants of different nations and religions, such as Cashmerians, Multanys

Inter-provincial.

Active commercial relations of Bengal with the other provinces of India till the mid-eighteenth century.

[15] *Considerations*, pp. 195-97.

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(Multani = people of Multan), Patans (Pathans), Sheikhs,[16] Suniassys,[17] Poggyahs (up-country merchants with turbans on their heads), Betteeas (Bhutias) and many others used to resort to Bengal annually in *caseelahs*,[18] or large parties of many thousands together (with troops of oxen) for the transport of goods from different parts of Hindustan, ..." [19] Holwell writes :— "in tranquil times this place (Burdwan) afforded an annual large vend for the valuable staples of lead, copper, broad-cloth, tin, pepper, tootanague. The Puggiah merchants from Delly and Agra, resorted yearly to this great mart, and would (come) again if peace was established in the country :—they purchased the above staples, either with money, or in barter for opium, tincal, saltpetre and horses." [19a] For many years the merchants of Kashmir were accustomed to advance money at Sunderbunds and provide

[16] Perhaps those refer to the Moslems of Arabia settling in India. Gradually the use of the term became more and more general and it came to be used also for Moslems coming to India from other countries besides Arabia.

[17] Those refer to the Sannyāsi (mendicant) traders, coming down in batches from Himalayan region, with finer forest products, such as pieces of sandal and aloe wood, rudrākṣa beads, etc.

[18] A kind of boat.

[19] Bolts' *Considerations*, p. 200.

[19a] *Interesting Historical Events*, p. 196.

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molunghes to work the saltpans there.[20] Similarly, the merchants from Bengal visited the different parts of upper Hindusthan, Assam, Cachar, Malabar and the Coramondel coasts [21] and Gujrat. This has found expression in contemporary literature in the following manner :—

References in contemporary literature.

"Being a Vaiśya, he maintains his family by carrying on a trade throughout the different parts of the world, such as Hastinā (Delhi), Karṇāṭa (Arcot), Vaṅga (Bengal), Kaliṅga, Gurjara (Gujrat), Bārānasī (Benares), Mahārāṣṭra, Kashmir, Pañcāla (Rohilkhand), Kamboja (Tibet),[22] Bhoja (Shahabad), Magadha, Jayantī (?), Drāvida (Southern India), Nepala, Kānchī (Conjeeveram), Ajodhya (Oudh), Avantī (Malwa), Mathurā, Kāmpilya (Farukkabad District), Māyāpurī (Haridwar), Dvārāvatī (Dvaraka, Kathiawad), Chīna (China), Mahāchīna (Mongolia), Kāmrupa (Assam)." [23]

[20] A letter from Mir Kasim to Vansittart, *Original Papers*, etc., Vol. I, pp. 229-31 ; *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, p. 167.

[21] Dow's *Hindustan*, Vol. I, p. ciii.

[22] Kashmiri and Armenian merchants carried on a trade between Bengal and Nepal and even went further up to Tibet. *Cf.* "It is said that at the time, Gurgin Khan, having heard from the Kashmiris and the Armenians, who were in trade with Lasa, about the wealth of Nepal, persuaded Mir Kasim to send an expedition to Nepal."—*Khulāṣat-ut-tawārikh*, f. 106. (Khudabukhsh Library, Patna).

[23] Jayanārāyana's *Harilīlā*.

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There is also a passage in another piece of work called '*Candrakānta*' which tells us clearly that merchants from Birbhum and Mallabhum (Bankura) carried on trade with Gujrat, and exchanged their own articles with those of that place.[24]

Bengal articles carried into the remotest parts of Hindusthan.

The manufactures of Bengal found their way into the remotest parts of Hindusthan, and "the low price at which salt could be conveyed through all the branches of the Ganges, rendered it an advantageous article of trade in the inland parts of Hindusthan. Great quantities were sent to Benares and Mirzapur from the markets of which, the province of Oudh and Allahabad, the territories of the Raja of Bundela and of all the petty princes of the Kingdom of Malwa, were supplied." [25] Vessels laden with betel-nut, tobacco, salt[26] and manufactured goods went to Assam

[24] "My name is Chandrakānta Rāya, and I am a Gandhavaṇika by caste and an inhabitant of Mallabhum. Leaving my country I have come here with seven boats, filled with articles of exchange. I want to exchange my own commodities (with those of this place), and I can stay here if you can provide me with those." The king replied,—"You will get as much as you want in exchange, if you will stay here with me."—*Typical Selections*, etc., Part II, pp. 1408-12 ; *Baṇgabhāṣa o Sāhitya*, pp. 662-63.

[25] Dow's *Hindustan*, Vol. I, pp. cxix-cxx.

[26] A letter from Mir Kasim to Vansittart, *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. I, pp. 164-68.

Verelst puts the following note on the higher prices of

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through the Brahmaputra and the Meghna, and they brought in exchange silk, lac, mugga dhuties, ivory and timber.[27] The traders of Bengal brought aloe wood and elephant's tusks from Cachar [28] and fir timber from Nepal.[29] Merchants sent iron, stoneware, rice, and other things from Balasore to Calcutta and they brought tobacco and other things from Calcutta to Balasore.[30] Holwell has mentioned Balasore stone dishes and cups in

Assam.

salt in the interior of North Bengal and Assam at Gowalpara, Rangpur and Chilmary:—"At Gwalpara the price of salt, after the establishment of the society (1765), was 400 Arcot rupees per hundred Assam maunds, which is full 1 d. 16-64 per lb. In the Rangpur and Chilmary districts, the price was 250 Arcot rupees per 100 Chilmary maunds, which is 0 d. 53-54 per lb. These were also the average prices for many years before the establishment of the society; but then they were the prices at which salt used to be engrossed by the rich, who sold it again at a considerable profit to the poor. These particulars I have from Mr. Baillie, who was agent for the society in the districts of Gwalpara, Rangpur, and Chilmary."—*A View of Bengal*, pp. 116-17 (foot-note).

[27] Copy of a letter from the Chief and Council of Dacca to the Board, dated January 10, 1753, *Vansittarts's Narrative*, Vol. II, p. 221; Dow's *Hindustan*, Vol. I, p. cxv.

[28] Proceedings, June 17, 1763 A.D.

[29] Proceedings, November 1, 1762.

[30] Letter from Natful Neheman, Thanadar of Balasore, January 1751. *Vide* Long, No. 538, p. 250.

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the list of articles on which duties were levied in the Calcutta market.[31]

Causes of the decline of inter-provincial trade by the native traders :

But various causes gradually contributed to bring about a decrease of this inter-provincial trade of Bengal by the native traders. One of these lay in the gradual over-shadowing of the Imperial authority at Delhi by the rise of independent provincial governors, who framed distinct transit and customs laws in their respective states to the great disadvantage of the traders.

(*a*) Independent provincial governors framing distinct laws ;

So long as the Mughal Empire was an organised and united whole, the merchants from one part of it could travel with safety to another and were not severely pressed with heavy *chowkey* exactions [32] while passing through the different provinces; but "the number of independent kingdoms which have started up from the ruins of the Mogul Empire, has almost destroyed the inland commerce of Bengal with the upper parts of Hindustan. Every prince levies heavy duties upon all goods that pass through the dominions. The merchants who formerly came down towards the mouths of the Ganges to purchase commodities have discontinued a trade, not only ruined by imposts, but even unsafe from banditti. The province of Oudh

31 *Indian Tracts.*

32 Consultations, Feb. 5, 1753 A.D.; Consultations, May 30, 1751 A.D.

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and Assam are the only inland countries with which Bengal drives, at present, any trade." [33] In course of a few years, Bengal's Indian trade also passed into the hands of the East India Company's agents who had power and means, sufficient for combating with these disadvantages, and their behaviour totally closed [34] the doors of that commerce for the common traders of the country.

(b) Misbehaviour of the Company's servants.

[33] Dow's *Hindustan*, Vol. I, p. cxv.

[34] "Then the trade, in such commodities as were produced and sold in the country, was entirely confined to the natives. They were either farmed out, where they were considerable enough to make an article, in the public revenues or circulated through the province by the poorer sort of people, to whom, whilst they afforded a subsistence, they at the same time added to the income of the state by the duties gathered upon them."—Hastings' opinion in the Consultations of 1st March, 1763. Vansittart's *Narrative*, Vol. II, p. 347; Letter from Mir Kasim to Vansittart, *Ibid*, Vol. II, pp. 164-68; Bolt's *Considerations*, p. 197.

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Section II.—*History of the British East India Company's Trade in Bengal.*

In 1740 Allahvardi usurped the masnad of Bengal for himself, and under him Bengal again passed into the hands of a strong and vigorus ruler. Since the death of Murshid Kuli, the English Company had carried on its trade, along with its servants and agents, according to its own interests and latterly no royal orders or official pressure obstructed the progress of the Company's commerce. But with the accession of Allahvardi the Company had to deal with a Nawab who was as strong as he was upright and who had a keen insight[35] into the economic condition of his state. His attitude towards the Western trading companies was impartial and he did not like to exalt one at the expense of the other. He forbade "the English and the French from committing any hostilities against each other in his dominions during the war

Impartial and strong attitude of Allahvardi towards the European traders.

35 "……he understood perfectly well the interests of his Government, favoured the poor merchants and administered justice very fairly when complaints succeeded in reaching him."—Memoir of M. Jean Law in *Hill's Bengal, 1756-57*, Vol. III, p. 160.

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declared between the two nations in 1741; and in the year 1748, he, on some contempt of his authority attacked and drove the factor of the Ostend Company out of the river of Hughly, and he several times exacted money of the English, French and Dutch settlements alledging that they ought to contribute to the expenses, as they participated of the protection of his arms." [36]

Obstructions to E.I.C.'s trade during his regime.

During his regime, the progress of the East India Company's trade in Bengal was not absolutely unhampered. The Company had to struggle hard against various odds and impediments, and had to pay much for ultimate mastery over the commerce of Bengal. Firstly, it had to satisfy the Nawab on more than one occasion, by the payment of large sums of money and various other presents; secondly, the plunderings and ravages of the Marathas exercised a pernicious influence on its trade; thirdly, it was sometimes harassed by some of the native Zamindars; and lastly, the rebellion of the Nawab's Afghan generals indirectly affected its trade to some extent. All these have been already described in details;[36a] a few more may be added here.

(a) Strictness and exactions of the Nawab.

In the year 1740, when Nawab Allahvardi had advanced towards Orissa in pursuit of Baquir Ali, the son-in-law of Murshid Kuli, the vanquished

[36] Orme, *Indostan*, Vol. II, pp. 45-46.

[36a] Chapter on "English Factories and Investments."

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Governor of Orissa, he demanded from the English Company "vessels to cruise about Ballasore and the coast of Orixa (Orissa) saying he would be revenged on the 3 Nations if his Enemys Escaped threatening to plunder all the factorys." [37] In the same year, English gentlemen in the Cassimbazar factory were obliged to pay the Nawab a visit which cost them Rs. 17,051, besides Rs. 11,600 paid to his officers.[38] In 1744 the Nawab accused the English of helping his enemies (the Marathas), and made an extraordinary demand on those at Cassimbazar, setting forth that "the English (who now) carried on the Trade of the whole World, used (formerly) to have 4 or 5 ships, but now brought 40 or 50 sail, which belonged not to the company....." [39] He ordered them to refrain from carrying on their business at any place unless they had supplied him with two months' pay for his troops amounting to three million rupees. At this the Englishmen in the Cassimbazar factory sent *vakils* to Fatechand soliciting his advice in the matter. Fatechand instructed them to make up matters quickly with the Nawab. The authorities in Calcutta gave them liberty to offer the Nawab from 40,000 to

[37] Letter to Court, dated 11th December, 1741, para. 128.

[38] *Ibid*, para. 131.

[39] Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 24.

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50,000 rupees using Fatechand's and Chainray's(?) good offices.[40] But they did not venture to offer only Rs. 50,000 to the Nawab, and Fatechand said[41] that " if empowered to offer five (lacs) he would endeavour to prevail on the Nabob to accept it, that the French and the Ducth had already agreed to pay their share on the Nabob's settling with the English, adding that in Shuja Daulet's[42] time a much larger sum was paid.....". The Company's business at Dacca and Patna was also stopped,[43] and the Nawab sent horse and foot soldiers to the *gurrah aurungs*.[44] He threatened to take up the Company's merchants one by one ; Preet Cotmah, one of the Company's *gomastas*, was tortured till he agreed to pay Rs. 1,35,000 and was delivered to another tormentor to make him agree to pay 3 lacks more ; Narsinghdas, a dadni-merchant's *gomasta*, was harshly treated ; Bally Cotmah sought protection in the Cassimbazar factory and Kebalram, a Cassimbazar merchant, was seized. The Council in Calcutta then ordered the chief of the Cassimbazar factory to offer Rs. 1,00,000 to the Nawab and accordingly their *vakils* were sent to the Nawab's darbar. But

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] *Ibid*, paras. 26 and 27.

[42] Nawab Shujauddin.

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] Letter to the Court of Directors, dated 8th November, 1744, para 3.

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the Nawab told them that " the English carried on the Trade of the whole country, yet paid no customs (and) secreted many of the Riots." He further demanded that Bally Cotmah should be delivered up to him "threatening to surround all the Factorys and prevent them getting provisions and if that did not make them comply with his demand (then he) would seize all their Money and Goods at the Aurungs." [45] When the matter was again referred to Fatechand and Chinray, they told the Company's *vakils* that the Nawab "would not be content with Two or Three Lack (lac), being obliged to get sufficient to pay the troops even at the Risque (risk) of his life; the Military officers were impatient and daily importuned him to give orders to fall on the English and the Aurungs." [46] They, therefore, asked the Company to offer speedily what might satisfy the Nawab. After considering the pros and cons of the matter, and apprehending a general loss of investments, the authorities in Calcutta resolved to solicit Seaid Hamud Cawn (Sayyid Ahmad Khan, a nephew of the Nawab and Faujdar of Hugli) at Hugli by paying him a large sum of money, to intercede for them before the Nawab. Sayyid Ahmad Khan promised to " procure Perwannas for the currency of Business for four Lack of Rupees." But he

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] *Ibid*, para. 5.

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could not make good his promise, and so the President wrote to Mr. Forster on 28th August, 1744, directing him to finish the affiair at Murshidabad "on the best terms he can within the compass of Proposal to Seiad Hamet." [47] At last, the Chief of the factory at Cassimbazar came to a settlement with the Nawab in the month of September by agreeing to pay him three lacs and a half. Fatechand brought to the factory, "perwannas for the Company's business at Hugly, Patna, Dacca and all the 'Aurungs;" he brought also all the *gomastas* "fetched (*i.e.*, arrested) from Malda and a receipt signed by Omichand's Gomasta for the money he had received back and the obligation given by him for 40,000 rupees and three obligations signed by the Malda Gomasta for a lac of rupees and two for 5,000 each...for which he received, in return, an Interest Note for Rs. 3,50,000." [48] These troubles naturally affected the Company's trade, as the Cassimbazar factory and the other subordinate factories could not properly fill in the investments,[49] and also the imported goods could not be satisfactorily disposed of.[50] Besides these, the Cassimbazar factory was obliged to pay Rs. 30,500 to the

[47] *Ibid*, para. 10.

[48] Letter to Court, dated 8th November, 1744, para. 12.

[49] *Ibid*, para. 13.

[50] *Ibid*, para. 17.

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Nawab's General and officers in the month of October (1744).[51] A fine horse was also presented to the Nawab, which cost 2,500 Madras rupees. The Patna factory had to present Rs. 5,000 to the Nawab and Rs. 3,000 to his officers, and had to sign a paper as to the rent of Chuprah town at Rs. 4,537-9-6.[52] The Dacca factory was also obliged to pay Rs. 5,000.[53]

Complaints of the Armenian and the Mughal traders against the English Company.

In 1748 the Nawab became seriously incensed with the English Company, as the latter had seized some trading vessels of the Armenian and the Mughal merchants.[54] The Armenians and the Mughals complained to the Nawab, who at once sent a parwannah to Governor Barwell to the following effect:—"The Syads, Moghuls, Armenians, etc., merchants of Houghly have complained that laks of Goods and Treasure with their ships you have seized and plundered, and I am informed from foreign parts that ships bound to Houghly you seized on under pretence of their belonging to the French. The

and retaliatory measures of the Nawab against the latter.

[51] Letter to Court, dated 9th February, 1745, para. 76. Mr. Forster paid a visit to the Nawab and was received graciously; the President also received a *seerpow* (headdress) and an elephant.

[52] *Ibid*, paras. 77-78.

[53] *Ibid*, para. 79.

[54] Consultations, May 15, June 1 and July 13, 1748.

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ship belonging to Antony with laks on Board from Mochel, and several curiosities sent me by the Sheriff of that place on that ship you have also seized and plundered. These merchants are the Kingdom's benefactors, their Imports and Exports are an advantage to all men, and their complaints are so grevious that I cannot forbear any longer giving ear to them. As you were not permitted to commit piracies therefore I now write you that on receipt of this you deliver up all the Merchants' Goods and effects to them as also what appertains unto me, otherwise you may be assured a due chastisement in such manner as you least expect."[55] The Company's Governor in Calcutta replied that the goods had been seized by a King's ship over which he had no control, and that the French, who had been at war with the English, had seized the goods of the Armenians as belonging to an enemy.[56]

But this could not satisfy the Nawab. He had already adopted repressive measures against the English traders in their different factories. He had ordered peons to be stationed on all their *gomastas* at the *aurungs* and had stopped the boats which were bringing down their goods.[57] Wadham Brooke, Chief of the Council at Cassimbazar, wrote a letter to the Council in Calcutta

[55] Consultations, January 11, 1749, A.D.

[56] I. D. R., Bengal and Madras papers, Vol. II.

[57] Letter to Court, January 27, 1748 A.D., para. 2.

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on 2nd January, 1749, informing that "a Chubdar[58] from the Nabob came to their factory with a perwannah for the Hon'ble President, copy whereof is enclosed with an inventory of the cargoes of the two ships of which restitution is required, not only in regard to them but of things of value belonging to the Nawab. That this perwannah probably may be sent to stop the clamours of the Armenians for it is thought upon the present exigency of affairs that the Nabob will not pursue violent measures, but that he may be kept in temper upon pretty easy terms, at least till a more favourable opportunity offers. That he has heard of a fine Arab Horse that is to be disposed of in Calcutta, which it is believed will be very acceptable to him. That they have pressing demands made on them for an annual present of 3,600 siccas to Hodjee (Haji Ahmed)[59] that used to be given him on account of the sugar Aurungs, which though it does not concern the Company must be complied with before they expect a currency to business."[60] In reply to his letter, the authorities in Calcutta informed him that they would support his plan of keeping the Nawab easy if it could be done on reasonable terms, and sent

[58] "A strick-bearer. A frequent attendant of Indian nobles, and in former days of Anglo-Indian officials of rank."—Hobson-Jobson, p. 157.

[59] The Nawab's brother.

[60] Consultations, January 9, 1749 A. D.

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him the horse for presenting it to the Nawab at a convenient opportunity.[61] Besides these, positive orders from Murshidabad had reduced the Company's trade at Dacca and Jugdea[62] to a critical state. The condition of the Dacca and Jugdea civilians had become extremely woeful for want of common subsistence, as all supplies had been stopped by the Nawab's officers. A letter from the Council of Dacca stated, "That they had received information of the Durbar's, not only having taken Mutchullacas (written agreements) from all the Tradesmen and Podars, not to have any transactions with them, but from the Moodys (grocers) not to supply them with necessaries and provisions, which occasioning a kind of mutiny amongst their soldiers and peons, the Chief and Council was obliged to send a message, that if provisions were stopped they must get them wherever they could, for it was better to die fighting

[61] Letter to Court, January 27, 1748 A. D. Similarly in 1754, the Company sent to the Nawab a fine Persian horse and some fine wax work and also gave some presents to the faujdar of Hugli and to his dewan Nandakumar. *Cf.* "The Hon'ble Company having directed a good understanding to be kept up with the officers of the Durbar, and as we are of opinion a present bestowed at this juncture would be of great service to the Company's affairs in preventing the Durbar from making use of any frivolous pretence for a stoppage of our business." Consultations, December 20, 1754 A. D.

[62] Letter to Court, February 11, 1748 A. D.

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than starving, upon which a small allowance was suffered to be brought in, but they expect in a day or two all provisions will be cut off when there will be mutiny not only on that account but on account of their arrears which they have not wherewithal to pay."[63] About this time the English merchants and the *gomastas* at Maldah complained that some of the Nawab's people had treated them very unjustly for refusing to comply with their demands for large sums of money. On hearing of this news, the Council informed Nowazish Muhammad Khan and Chamerage (?) of it and requested them to write to the Nawab for a remedy, " to which they answered that they should be very willing to comply with their request but apprehended the Nawab's affairs were in such a state at that time their writing to him would avail but little."[64] Being thus reduced to straits, the English tried to propitiate the Nawab in various ways. According to the directions of the Council in Calcutta, sent on the 3rd of March, 1749, the Englishmen in the Cassimbazar factory solicited the help of Hookum Beg and the Seths for a satisfactory settlement of the dispute with the Nawab, but they were told in reply that " without a present to the Nabab it would be impossible to obtain a clearance to business."

63 Consultations, January, 23, 1749 A. D.
64 Consultations, May 2, 1748 A. D.

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Carooly Beg came to the Cassimbazar factory and told the Englishmen there that "the Nawab expected they would satisfy the Armenians without further delay and for the present has ordered two hundred Buxeries [65] to be quartered on that Factory, that he himself was come as a mediator between them and the Armenians, and would do them all the good offices in his powers." [66] The authorities in Calcutta wrote to Mr. Wadham Brooke, Chief of the Cassimbazar factory, to "find out the Nabab's views and ends in endeavouring thus to the distress of the Company's affairs," and also to ascertain what would satisfy him. [67] The Chief replied on the 24th of April, 1749, that according to the advice of Carooly Beg, he desired that the authorities in Calcutta should procure a paper signed by the Armenians who resided there, by way of an address from them to the Nawab, expressing therein their satisfaction at what they (the English) had done. [68] He also informed them that the general opinion of the Nawab's distressing the Company's affairs was that he wanted a sum of money from each party

[65] The *buxeries* were matchlockmen, who were employed on duties similar to those performed by the *barkandazes* of a later period.

[66] Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] Consultations, 4th May, 1749; Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.

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and that it was thought some time ago that about 50,000 rupees would compose matters; but he declared his opinion that, before they could come to know with certainty what he wanted, offers must be first made from their side.[69] Accordingly, the Council in Calcutta ordered its Secretary "to draw up a paper for the Armenians to sign when translated into Persian," and informed the Chief at Cassimbazar that it would be forwarded to him as soon as the Armenians had signed thereto.[70] The Armenians were asked to sign the address to the Nawab, as drawn by the Company's Secretary, when they attended the Council on 1st June, 1749, but they declared their unwillingness to do so.[71] The Council then informed Mr. Wadham Brooke

[69] *Ibid.*

[70] Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.

[71] *Ibid*; Consultations, 1st June, 1749. When the Armenians refused to sign the address, and thus destroyed all hopes of accommodating the matter with the Nawab, the President asked the opinion of the Council as to how they should proceed with them. The majority decided to inform the Armenians that if the English were compelled to pay any sum to the Nawab and the Armenians refused to repay the same, then they would be expelled from Calcutta after the expiry of two months. The Armenians were accordingly called in and acquainted therewith. Mr. William Kempe, however, expressed his opinion that "the staying (of) two months may impede the Company's business, so far as to prevent our getting a tonnage for the shipping; therefore they ought to be forced to satisfy the Nabab immediately."

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about the refusal of the Armenians, and also about their (the English) writing to Mr. Kelsall at Balasore, for endeavouring to procure from the Nawab (who was then at Balasore in pursuit of the Marathas) a clearance to their business. Mr. Wadham Brooke was further directed to use his best endeavours "to procure such a clearance either through the Nabob's favour, or else on easy terms," and for that purpose, he was permitted to offer as much as 15,000 or 20,000 rupees.[72] But he replied on 14th June that he had applied to the Seths and Biramdutt (Biru Dutt), who had told him that nothing could be done before the Nawab's return to Murshidabad. He also expressed the opinion that 15,000 or 20,000 rupees would be insufficient (if the Nawab should favour them so far as to take nothing for himself) for the forces put over them, and hence requested that he might know the utmost extent of what the Company was ready to pay the Nawab in order "to expedite this business as soon as possible upon the Nawab's arrival." [73]

In the meanwhile, Mr. Kelsall had approached the Nawab at Balasore on the 9th of June and had handed over to him the President's letter,[74]

[72] *Ibid.*

[73] Consultations, 19th June, 1749. Letter to Court, dated 10th August, 1749.

[74] The President's letter to the Nawab :—

" The bad consequences attending our Company's affair

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using every possible argument to convince him "how prejudicial this stoppage of business would be to his revenues as well as (to) the Company." The Nawab at last assured him that he would befriend the English on his return to Murshidabad and desired him to "transport his (the Nawab's) ammunition and cannon to Calcutta with the greatest expedition, the roads being so bad, he could not carry them with him." [75]

are from the unjust complaints of the Armenians and others to your Excellency, is beyond expression. To add still more to our misfortune, the hardships we suffer from the forces on our Cassimbazar Factory, is without precedent, distressing us in our credit as well as in every other manner the most disobliging, by which it appears the complainants act rather as open enemies to our country than humble petitioners for justice with your Excellency, they well knowing the Company are not aggressors ; nor was it in our power to prevent the accidents that have happened which I have before taken the liberty to remonstrate to your Excellency that had they been in any manner concerned therein, I would have taken care. You should not have been troubled with any complaints, but should have complied with whatever had been agreeable to your Excellency's justice. As the case now is we have very particularly advised our Company thereof, and the great favour you are pleased to show these people. But it requires a length of time before we can have an answer : humbly request your Excellency will permit the Company's affairs to go on in the usual manner without any further molestation." Consultations, 6th July, 1749.

[75] Consultations, 19th June, 1749 A.D.; Letter to Court, dated 10th August, 1749.

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After the Nawab's return to Murshidabad on 7th August, 1749, the Chief of the Cassimbazar factory sent '*vakils*' (representatives) to wait on him. He asked the '*vakils*' if they had procured the "*Raudjee-Nomma,*" *i.e.*, the deed of agreement, from the Armenians in Calcutta. They replied in the negative with the remark that the Armenians did not make any such declaration for fear of being obliged thereby to pay the choute (?).[76] The Nawab remarked that "he would give them a '*mutchlaca*' (a written obligation or bond) under his own hand not to take a rupee from them and asked them if Mr. Kelsall was arrived aggreable to a promise made him when at Balasore and spoke much in that gentleman's commendation."[77] This attitude of the Nawab led the Chief of the Cassimbazar factory to think that Mr. Kelsall would be the most 'acceptable' and proper person to finish the matter, and so, on the 10th of August, he wrote to the authorities in Calcutta to send him immediately to the Nawab. The authorities thus promptly sent Mr. Kelsall to the Nawab's *darbar.*[78] He was warmly received there, and availed

[76] It is not clear what is referred to by this word "choute"; perhaps the frequent incursions of the Marathas had familiarised the people with this term and it was loosely used for any kind of contribution.

[77] Letter to Court, dated 10th August, 1749.

[78] *Ibid.*

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himself of that opportunity to present a petition to the Nawab, setting forth in the strongest terms possible, "the Company's great sufferings since the business was first stopped, and the little foundation the Armenians had for this complaint, wherewith the Company had nothing to do." [79] But this did not produce the desired effect; for after perusing it, the Nawab replied that the Armenians must be satisfied.[80] The gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory then proceeded to Hookum Beg and Carooly Beg, who really controlled the whole matter, and by agreeing to offer 15,000 or 20,000 rupees to the Nawab, they requested them to settle it favourably for the Company's business.[81] But these two men, being of an extremely mercenary temper and intending to squeeze out some money for themselves, also rejected their (the gentlemen in the Cassimbazar factory) offer "as being far short of what the Nawab would expect." Matters became day by day too serious to be long deferred, as the English at Cassimbazar were informed that the Nawab would shortly increase the number of forces placed over their factory if his demands were not speedily satisfied.[82] They wrote to the Council in Calcutta on 11th September, 1749, that after Mr. Eyles' (who had

79 Consultations, 31st August, 1749.
80 *Ibid.*
81 *Ibid.*
82 *Ibid.*

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succeeded Mr. Wadham Brooke as the Chief of the Cassimbazar factory) arrival at Murshidabad they were informed that "nothing less than four lacks of rupees would satisfy the Nawab for what the Armenians, etc., had suffered by the capture of the two ships ; but on giving Hookem Beg and Crooley Beg to understand no great sum on such unjust a pretence would ever be complied with and standing it out with them they have reduced to two lakhs which Hookem Beg tell them the Nawab will certainly insist on. But notwithstanding this they still believe that by standing out longer it may in time be brought down to one laak (lac), besides 25 (25,000) or 30,000 rupees to Hookem Beg and officers, and lower than this they think it will be hardly possible to reduce it without undergoing the disadvantages of losing the whole season." [83]

The Nawab sent Carooly Beg to the Cassimbazar factory to sound the intentions of the English "with regard to making up the present dispute." The English complained, as before, of the injustice of the Armenians' demands, and expressed their inability to pay enormous sums to the Nawab. But they promised to reward the services of Hookum Beg and Carooly Beg, if they represented " the case favourably to the Nawab and use their interest to make it up on easy

[83] Consultations, 12th September, 1749.

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terms." [84] Carooly Beg promised "to employ his whole interests to finish it in the best manner he could." [85] The English further wrote to the Seths, and to Gulam Husain and other officers in the Nawab's *darbar*, requesting them to use their influence in favour of the Company.[86] But Carooly Beg was too greedy to be easily satisfied, and "finding it impossible to persuade Carooly Beg to accept their offer of a lack of rupees (1,00,000), he having received the Nabob's orders for insisting on one laak and Rs. 20,000, they (the gentlemen in the Cassimbazar factory) agreed to pay the same on Carooley Beg's promising to procure them the Perwannahs as soon as the Dusserah [87] was over but the Nawab being confined to his room by sickness prevented Carooley Beg's gaining access to him." [88] Apprehending that any further delay might greatly add to the distress of the Company's trade in Bengal, the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory sent their *vakils* to Hookum Beg and Carooly Beg to enquire if the Nawab's order could not be obtained by writing to him that they had

84 Consultations, 18th September, 1749.

85 *Ibid.*

86 *Ibid.*

87 The Durga Puja festival, which is celebrated in Bengal in the month of October. We have descriptions of this festival in several contemporary accounts, *e.g.*, in *Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa*, in *Voyage of Harmich to India in 1745-49*, *Bengal: Past and Present*, April-June, 1933.

88 Consultations, 18th October, 1749.

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consented to comply with his demand. But those two men replied that "as the complaints of the Armenians made great noise at Muxadavad, the Nabob first of all required them to appear before all the Durbar whilst he was present and publicly acknowledge themselves to be satisfied for their losses....." [89]

Satisfaction of the Armenians; the Nawab pacified and currency to English trade gained at great costs.

After his recovery, the Nawab held a *darbar* in the night of 15th October, 1749, when the leading Armenians were present and expressed their satisfaction regarding their losses caused by the English.[90] The Nawab then gave orders publicly for a currency to the Company's business, and for removing the forces from their factory. But when the *darbar* was over Hookum Beg gave the English to understand that "before these orders could be executed, the Rs. 1,20,000 must be paid on security given for it..." [91] This caused a new difficulty for the English, for they had been already suffering from great pecuniary wants; the Seths had adopted a strong attitude and had expressed their unwillingness to lend any further amount to the Company. After earnest requests they were able

Pecuniary troubles of the Company.

[89] Consultations, 18th October, 1749.

[90] Consultations, 20th October, 1749.

[91] *Ibid.*

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to secure one lac and fifty thousand rupees [92] from them in order to satisfy the Nawab.[93]

In the year 1751 a new danger threatened the English trade in the Hugli river. In that year two Englishmen, Messrs. Acton and Mills, under the protection of the Germans, appeared between Chandernagore and Hugli, with three ships of war hoisting German colours. This gave a great offence to the Nawab, who immediately wrote to Mr. Dawson, the President of the Council in Calcutta, asking him to take precautionary measures and to drive out those German ships of war. Mr. Dawson replied on 19th August, 1751 :—" I have given orders to the pilots not to take charge of any of the Alleman ships or show them the way on any account, and do not doubt but that the Dutch and French have done the same. God forbid that they should come this way, but should this be the case, I am in hopes that through your uprightness they will be either sunk, broke or destroyed." [94] By the year 1752 the

[92] *Ibid.*

[93] *Cf.* " The Presidency of Calcutta not complying with his (the Nawab's) demands on the first summons, he more than once stopped their trade; however, all they paid from his accession did not exceed 100,000 pounds sterling ; which on an average was not two in a hundred on the amount of their investments to the end of the war." Orme's *Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 46. For further details on this point *vide* the chapter on " *English Factories and Investments.*"

[94] Consultations, August 19, 1751 A.D.

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Nawab became wholly pacified with the English traders and issued a *parawanah* in favour of their trade on 8th Octoher, 1752. [95]

The Nawab's *parawanah* in favour of English trade.

The Maratha invasions of Bengal obstructed the Company's trade for a few years. Mr. Orme says, "The Marattoes during the war made only one considerable depredation on the English trade. This was in the year 1748, when they stopped a fleet of boats coming from Cassimbazar to Calcutta, and plundered it of 300 bales of raw silk belonging to the Company. But the advantages of the European commerce in general were much impaired by the distress of the province, which enhanced the prices and debased the fabrics of all kinds of manufactures." [96] His

(*b*) Influeuce of Maratha invasions and (*c*) the Afghan rebellions.

[95] "Of all merchants of the greatest and the picture of friendship, Mr. Drake, Governor of the English Company, whom God preserve.

By the favour of the Almighty the bright eyes and soul of Nabab Munsoor Am Mullick, Bahaudur, arrived at Muxadavad on the 24th Secandar Son Paunch; your friendship, praises, presents, and going to meet him, he has told me a great deal about so much that I cannot express it. I am extremely pleased and delighted with you and a thousand times remain sensible of it, and in return by the grace of God the Company's business, I will be very favourable to." Consultations, October 11, 1752 A.D.

[96] Orme, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 46.

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statement is fully corroborated by contemporary records of the Company, as has been already written.[97] The influence of the Afghan rebellions has also been pointed out there.

(*d*) Obstructions from the Zamindars.

The Company had to suffer occasional disturbances at the hands of this or that native Zamindar. In 1741, Mr. Henry Campion, while coming from Bencoolen on 'Princess Augusta' with two Europeans and some '*lascars*,' went on shore for water and provisions. The Raja of Conica (Kanika) detained them and demanded 2,000 rupees, a piece of scarlet cloth, and a gold watch for their release ; and the Company had to satisfy his demand for releasing its own men.[98] In 1745 the Company's merchants at Maldah complained that the "Troubles and extortions of Government ruined numbers of weavers, (and) provisions (became) excessive dear ;" and they prayed for advance payments.[99] In 1748 some merchants of the Company had "goods coming down on their Dadney contracts which were stopped at Hajiruhattee (?) by Rajah Aunoopanian (?) one body whereof was stolen and that the Zemindar suspected of the action is gone to Muxadavad," and

[97] In the chapter on "*English Factories and Investments.*"

[98] Letter to Court, dated 11th January, 1742, para. 189.

[99] Letter to Court, dated 11th August, 1745.

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again in the same year, the Pultah (Fultah) Zamindar stopped several boats with English *dastaks* and realised money from the merchants.[100] In 1754 Rajballabh, on becoming the Deputy Nawab of Dacca, peremptorily demanded the usual visit from the Dacca Factors. The French having compounded it for Rs. 4,300, the English also thought it prudent to do the same rather than prejudicing their trade. Just the next year, he sent orders to Bakarganj to stop all boats that might pass that way, upon which the Dacca Factors immediately despatched a light boat with orders to all the Company's boats to proceed by the way of Tantalea.[101] But fearing that the boat might not overtake them and also that there might likewise be people sent to Tantalea, they sent an express letter to the Council in Calcutta soliciting its protection.[102] The Council decided to "despatch Lieutenant John Harding on a command of soldiers of 25 Buxaries (recruited from Buxar) in order to clear these boats if stopped in their way to Dacca and to take them under his protection." Several rice boats, belonging to the Company, were also stopped at Dacca, and this occasioned a great scarcity and dearness of rice

100 Consultations, April, 1748 A. D. For other details on this point *vide* the chapter on *English Factories and Investments.*

101 Letter to Court, 1st March, 1745.

102 Consultations, February 12, 1755 A. D.

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in that place.[103] In 1755 Raja Tilakchand of Burdwan,[104] stopped the Company's business within his jurisdiction by putting *chowkis* upon all the Company's factories there and imprisoning the Company's *gomastas*. The Council regarded this as an extremely insolent and unwarrantable step and decided that the President should "prepare an address to the Nawab, and send up a chubdar immediately with it, complaining of the Rajah's insolence and unwarranted proceedings in stopping the Honourable Company's business transacted in his Provinces and seizing their effects, and that he insisted upon a proper reprimand being sent to the Rajah and the usual currency given to our affairs at the Aurungs situated in his jurisdiction."[105] This representation to the Nawab proved effective, as he immediately ordered the Burdwan Raja to remove all

103 *Ibid.*

104 The cause of the misunderstanding was this :—

Ramjiban Kaviraj, a *gomasta* of the Burdwan Raja, owed Rs. 6,357 to Mr. John Wood. The latter, failing to secure the payment of the amount, laid a complaint against Ramjiban in the Mayor's Court, and having obtained a warrant of sequestration against him, he sealed up the Raja's house and effects in Calcutta. This gave a great offence to the Raja, who immediately ordered the stoppage of Company's trade within his dominions by imprisoning their *gomastas* and putting *chowkis* upon their factories. Consultations, April 1, 1755 A. D.

105 *Ibid.*

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restraints upon the Company's trade.[106] In 1757 some Zamindars near Maldah and Sunamukhi ill-treated the Company's *gomastas* and peons there, and the Rajah of Bishnupur (in Bankura District) severely exacted the usual duties from the English. The Council wrote to Mr. Scrafton, the Company's Resident at Murshidabad, directing him to represent the complaints at the Nawab's *darbar* and to insist on those Zamindars being punished in an exemplary manner.[107]

[106] The Nawab's letter to the Burdwan Raja:—

"I received an Arasdoss from the English Governor in which he acquaints me that the Gomastha Ramjiban Kaviraj being indebted to an Englishman, they had set peons upon your house agreeable to their custom, for which reasons you have put chowkis upon all the Company's Factories within your districts and stopped their business, imprisoning their Gomasthas. This manner of acting is contrary to your interest and very wrong, as it is by no means allowable that a Zemindar should take such a step without an order first had from me. The English are foreigners and have settled in our country on a dependence of our protection in their Trade ; and if they are treated in this manner, the consequence will be their withdrawing themselves and their trade, on which account I positively direct that on the immediate receipt of this Perwannah you remove the chowkis you have put on their factories, and let their business have the usual currency without any further trouble." Consultations, May 5, 1755 A. D.

[107] Proceedings, November 3, 1757 A. D.

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Retaliatory measures adopted by the Company's people.

Retaliatory measures were not lacking on the part of the Company's people also. About August 1746, the man in charge of the *chowkis* at Rangasoula [108] "growing very troublesome, stopping sloops and boats," the Council in Calcutta ordered an officer and twenty men to proceed down thither, to remove his *chowkis* and bring him up as a prisoner. On 28th September, the officer returned with his party from Rangasoula and informed the members of the Council that "on his arrival there the Jemindar (Zamindar) fired upon him upon which he landed his men and burnt the 'chowkey.' The Jemindar made his escape into the woods and sent him an Assurance (that he) would never stop any more boats with English colours." The officer cleared up and brought with him all the boats that had been stopped there.[109] In the same month, one Dulputray, an officer belonging to Mir Jafar, stopped some boats, bearing the Company's *dastaks* at Hugli. When the Company's *vakils* complained about it to the Naib Faujdar of Hughli, he declared that he had no hand in the matter and had no command over that officer. Dulputray carried these boats to Cutdalpara (?) where he wanted to divide the

108 There are four places of this name ; it is not certain which of these is referred to here.

109 Letter to Court, dated 22nd February, 1747, para. 104.

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goods among his own men. Upon this the members of the Council in Calcutta thought it necessary to recover these boats by force, and accordingly agreed to send Captain Robert Hamilton with a party of military for that purpose, and kept two country boats in readiness for future emergencies. Captain Robert was ordered to proceed up the river and to clear all boats (with the Company's *dastaks*) that had been stopped "by fair means if any possible (or) otherwise to use his utmost force and when he had cleared the Boats to send these bound downwards hither with a party of soldiers and himself with the remaining men under his command to proceed to Nuddea" to await there the arrival of some boats of the Company from Cassimbazar.[110]

Attempt of the English Company to assert its superior right in the field of trade.

There are some instances which show that the Company tried to assert a superior right over others in matters of trade in Bengal, and also sometimes adopted disciplinary measures against the defaulting merchants.[111] In 1750-51 the Council in Calcutta strictly warned the '*Blacks*' (native merchants) residing there, against the practice of dealing with the French for goods suitable for the European

110 *Ibid*, para. 105.

111 *Vide* chapter on "*English Factories and Investments.*"

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market.[112] In the same year, when the Nawab demanded of President Dawson the surrender of a native merchant in Calcutta named Ramkissen Seth, who had carried goods to Calcutta without paying the Murshidabad *Syre*[113] *Chowkey* duties, the President replied that Ramkissen's father and grandfather were the Company's *dadni* merchants, and that he himself being a debtor of the Company's could not be surrendered without much loss to them.[114] In accordance with the orders of the Court of Directors, the Council in Calcutta acquainted the Armenians in 1751 A. D. that they must pay consulage on their exports equally with the covenanted servants, and affixed public orders at the gates of the fort, forbidding all persons living within the limits of the Company's jurisdiction to export any goods from Calcutta without a permit from the consulage Collector.[115] The Company's servants regarded a *free merchant*

[112] Letter to Court, 4th February, 1757, para. 52.

[113] During the 18th century the term *Syre* or *Sayer* "was applied to a variety of inland imposts, but especially to local and arbitrary charges levied by Zemindars and other individuals with a show of authority, on all goods passing through their estates by land or water or sold at markets (*bazars*, *hauts*, and *gaunges*) established by them." *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 604.

[114] Consultations, May 30, 1751 A. D. The Governor's letter to Allahvardi, dated the 30th of May, 1751, Bengal and Madras Papers, Vol. II.

[115] Letter to Court, August 20, 1751 A. D.

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as an eyesore, as he generally interfered with their profits in trade.[116] In 1753 John Wood, a free merchant, applied for a pass on the ground that without it he would be reduced to "the condition of a foreigner, or indeed of the meanest black fellow."[117] This was too much for the Company's Council in Calcutta to bear. The members of the Council strongly protested against it in their letter to the Court of Directors, January 15, 1753 A.D.:—"We beg to represent to your Honours the great prejudice such a liberty would be to the place in general, for if it be permitted, a free merchant by lending his name without any capital of his own and by the assistance and concern of the natives, he may always set voyages on foot of utter destruction of the trade of his settlement in general, and a certain injury to every gentleman in the service."

Abuse of *dastaks*.

The Company's servants practised gross anomalies in the use of *dastaks* which were utilised by them frequently in their private trade and were even sold to the *black traders*, to the great prejudice of the revenues of the Nawab's state. Properties of the native merchants were very often taken from

116 Long's *Selections from the unpublished Records*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. xxv.

117 Consultations, January 15, 1753 A. D. Holwell remarked on it: "the foreign trade of the settlement is become much too general."

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one place to another, free of duties, with passes obtained under English names. In order to prevent this the Company ordered in 1752 that "the real proprietors of goods should be stated." [118] The European rivals (the Dutch and the French) of the English were also sometimes supplied with goods by the servants of the English Company for their personal gains and these goods passed free of duties under *dastaks* of the latter.[119] We learn from the Court's Letter, January 31, 1755, that many of the Company's servants made private gains from the Company's investments, for which the Directors asked the Council in Calcutta that "their (servants') future conduct should be well looked after and a scrutiny made into their past management." They further remarked:—"you must use all prudent measures by applications to the Darbar and other ways to get relieved from the impositions of the chokeys planted up and down the country represented to us in your letter of the 4th January, but at the same time you must be extremely careful to prevent all abuses of the Dusticks, that the Government may have no pretences to interrupt the trade on that account, which we are afraid they have sometimes too much reason for." [120] David Rannie has given a

118 Consultations, October 9, 1752 A.D.

119 Court's Letter, dated the 31st of January, 1755 A.D., para. 56.

120 *Ibid*, para. 65.

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true picture of the anomalous situation, which this abuse of *dastaks* created, in the following words :—" The injustice to the Moors consisted in that being by their courtesy permitted to live here as merchants, to protect and judge what natives were their servants and to trade custom-free, we under that pretence protected all the Nabab's subjects that claimed our protection, though they were neither our servants nor our merchants, and gave our dustucks or passes to numbers of natives to trade custom free, to the great prejudice of the Nawab's revenue, nay more, we levied large duties upon goods brought into our districts from the very people that permitted us to trade custom-free, and by numbers of their impositions (framed to raise the Company's revenue) some of which were ruinous to ourselves such as taxes on marriages, provisions, transferring land property and caused eternal clamour and complaints against us at Court." [121]

Protest of Siraj-ud-dowla;

The abuses in the field of internal commerce of Bengal did not escape the attention of Siraj-ud-dowla, who complained " that the British had abused the privileges of trade granted them by their firman." But Plassey soon decided his fate, and the disorders and weakness of the central authority

121 Causes of the loss of Calcutta, by David Rannie, *Hill, Bengal in 1756-57*, Vol. III, p. 384.

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that followed the battle of Plassey, allowed these abuses to grow from day to day. The moral effect of the victory of Plassey was very great; it filled the minds of the Company's servants in Bengal with a strong desire for further aggrandisement in the field of wealth and supremacy in the field of politics. By the general sannad issued by Mir Jafar on 15th July, 1757, he confirmed the privileges of the Company in definite and emphatic terms and passed strict orders against hampering English trade in any way. Of course, technically speaking "with regard to trade no new privileges were asked of Mir Jafar none indeed were wanted by the Company who were contended with the terms granted them in 1716," [122] but there is no doubt that the victory greatly increased the prestige and influence of the Company. No sooner had this influence been felt than "many innovations were practised by some of the Company's servants, or the people employed under their authority." [123] They began to trade in articles which were before prohibited and they claimed also exemption from duties not only on exports and imports but on all articles in their private trade. Orme has very aptly written:—".....but as it is the

Effects of Plassey —growth of trade abuses.

122 *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. I, p. 24.

123 *Ibid.*

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nature of man to err with great changes of fortune, many, not content with the undisputed advantages accruing from the revolution, immediately began to trade in salt and other articles which had hitherto been prohibited to all Europeans ; and Meer Jaffer complained of those encroachments within a month after his accession ; which although checked for the present, were afterwards renewed, and at last produced much more mischief than even disinterested sagacity could have foreseen." [124] Mr. Bolts has remarked :—"after these the Gomasthas so well availed themselves of this new acquired power, that after the Company by their substitutes, had made their first Nawob Jaffer Ali Khan, in the year 1757, their black gomasthas in every district assumed a jurisdiction which even the authority of the Rajahs and Zemindars in the country durst not withstand." [125] In July 1758, Mr. Scrafton wrote from Moradbag to P. R. Pearkes at Dacca : " There is likewise a complaint lodged against an English Gomastha at Chilmaree, that he gives protection to numbers of merchants who trade there which has proved a loss to the Government of seventy thousand rupees. Also (there have been) several cases of under protection to the Zemindars, Tenants and

State of affairs after Mir Jafar's accession.

124 Orme's *Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 189.

125 *Considerations on Indian Affairs*, p. 191.

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others."[126] The *gomastas* were also very often guilty of frauds and made private gains in the Company's investments, *e.g.*, Kussenundah (Kusananda), a *gomasta* of the Company's at Cassimbazar, had been found guilty of several frauds in the management of the Company's investments; he had been detected in giving false accounts for the year 1756 by overcharging Rs. 8,427 in the real cost of goods provided by him.[127]

With a view to check the abuse of *dastaks* by the servants, the Company established a number of "Dustuck Peons with badges carrying a Persian inscription, signifying their being the Company's servants." With every *dastak* one of those peons was sent, who was responsible for goods passing free of all duties and impositions; and after the delivery of the goods, the peon was ordered to return the *dastak* to the President of the Council in Calcutta to be cancelled by him, so that no further use might be made of it. For defraying these additional expenses the *dastaks* were valued at Rs. 5 each.[128] The Captains and officers of ships also carried on a large private trade to the great prejudice of the Nawab's as well as the Company's interests. In order to prevent this, the Company advertised that "no persons

126 *Original Papers relating to the disturbances. in Bengal, 1759-64*, Vol. I, p. 4.

127 Letter to Court, December 31, 1758 A. D.

128 Letter to Court, January 16, 1758 A. D.

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residing in the settlement are to purchase woolen goods, copper, lead, or iron from the Commanders or Officers of the Company's ships, without permission from the Import Ware-House Keeper for the time being, upon pain of losing the Company's protection and being expelled the settlement."[129]

Regulations of the Company to check to abuse of dastaks,

But these regulations were not effective in preventing the abuses, which had become so rampant and universal. On the 13th of January, 1759, Mr. Hasting wrote the following from Moradbag to Mr. W. B. Summer, Chief at Dacca: "I have received a long letter from the Shahzada in which he complains that you have begun to carry on a large trade in salt, and betelnut, and refuse to pay the duties on those articles, which has likewise encouraged others to do the same in your name: which practice if continued will oblige him to throw up his post of Shahbunder Daroga...—We have not, I believe, any right to trade in salt and betelnut; at least, it was never (that I know of) stipulated in our favour with the Nawab; and with respect to the salt trade, I myself know, that none of the Company's servants, not the Colonel himself has engaged in it without the Nawab's Perwannah."[130] An English *gomasta* named

proved ineffective.

[129] Letter to Court, February 27, 1758 A. D.

[130] *Original Papers*, etc., Vol. I, p. 5; *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. I, pp. 26-27.

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Mr. Chevalier had carried a large cargo of salt to Chilmaree (Chilmary) and had taken '*muchlacas*' (written bonds) from all the other traders in the same article by which they were not allowed to sell any salt till his own amount had been disposed of.[131] Worse than this happened, when Mr. Chevalier openly defied the authority of the Wadadar[132] of the Baharbund Paragana, and refused to explain the commission under which he acted, when the latter had demanded it of him.[133] All these were communicated to the Nawab, who murmured greatly before Mr. Hastings,

131 *Ibid*, p. 28.

132 "One who is bound by an engagement, a contractor, a government officer, responsible for the collections of a Zamindari, a farmer of the revenue." *Wilson's Glossary*, p. 553.

133 Mr. Chevalier's letter to Meer Atta Olla (Mir Ataulla), Wadadar of the paragana Baharbund: — "The letter, which you sent to my writer, I have received. You write, that if I belong to the English, I must have the English Sunnud and desire a copy of it to be sent to you. In answer, I ask who are you, that I should send you a copy of the Sunnud? If you want to be informed who I am, and who sent me, send a man to the Chief who will answer you. If the people of your Pergunnuh are guilty of any insolence to mine, I shall chastise them handsomely for it. Forbid your people, that they enter into no quarrels with mine; if they do without reason they shall be punished; if my people behave ill to yours, do you write me word of it, and I will punish them." *Original Papers*, etc., Vol. I, p. 7.

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the Resident at Moradbag. So Mr. Hastings again wrote to Mr. Sumner on the 26th of July, 1759, complaining against Mr. Chevalier's conduct:—"Many complaints have been laid before the Nawab against Mr. Chevalier, who is accused of having acted in a very violent and arbitrary manner at Chilmaree, and Coreegaum [134] by oppressing the merchants of those places in the monopoly of several commodities, particularly salt and tobacco, no one being allowed to buy or sell either of these articles but with his permission. A translation of a letter of the Wadadar of the Pergunah, under the seal of Mr. Chevalier in answer to the demand made by him, to know by what authority he came into those parts, I send you herewith on which I shall make only this remark, that the magistrates and public officers of the Government have an undoubted right to see the Company's dustuck having no other way to distinguish between the agents of the Company and others usurping the English name, nor the Company any means besides to secure their own privileges. It cannot, therefore, but appear strange in any person employed by the English that they should make any difficulty to show by what powers they are commissioned; unless they are conscious they are guilty of practices which ought to be concealed....." [135]

134 Rennel's Curygong (Kurigram).

135 *Original Papers*, etc., pp. 6-7.

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Growing political disorders led to the increase of trade abuses by the time of Mir Kasim's accession.

But all these complaints ended in smoke. Very soon, the death of his son Miran and the mutiny of the soldiers made Mir Jafar's position extremely critical. Not to speak of removing those grievances, which had been telling heavily on the resources of the native merchants as well as of the common people, it became absolutely impossible for him to tide over the dangers with which he was then confronted. Disorders prevailed all round, taking advantage of which the *gomastas* and servants of the Company went on increasing, day by day, the volume of their illegal trade.

Thus by the time of Mir Kasim's accession, these abuses reached the highest point of culpability. Many new factories were established in every part of the country, both on the Company's account, and by private gentlemen, and "a trade was carried on in all sorts of goods, such as it was never yet the custom to trade in."[136] As Verelst has remarked :—"A trade was carried on without payment of duties, in the prosecution of which infinite oppressions were committed. English agents and Gomasthas, not contented with injuring the people, trampled on the authority of Government, binding and punishing the Nabob's

136 Mir Kasim's reply to the representations of the Board, *Original Papers*, Vol. I, pp. 170-73; *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 46-47.

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officers wherever they presumed to interfere."[137] Mr. George Gray, Chief of the Maldah factory, committed oppressions by seizing and imprisoning the peskar of Hiramun, the Zamindar and Wadadar of Tajpur, and in sending sepoys and Europeans to purchase grain and erect new factories in every part of Purneah. A complaint was made to the Nawab against Mr. Gray by Mir Sher Ali, the Naib of Purneah. The Nawab sent a copy of this complaint to Mr. Ellis on 22nd January, 1762, desiring him thereby to redress Sher Ali's grievances.[138] Mr. Ellis replied on 4th February, 1762, to the effect "that Mr. Gray complained to Sheer Aly Cawn twice or thrice against the Zemindars but receiving no answer nor redress, he was under the necessity of taking such measures."[139] About this time an officer of the Nawab's named Coja Antoon was punished for purchasing five maunds of saltpetre; he was imprisoned by Mr. Ellis who sent him to Calcutta for answering the charge against him. After a confinement for three months he was delivered over to the Nawab for further punishment. Another charge against him was that he had himself given a certificate of some goods having been duly passed in contempt of

137 Verelst, *View of Bengal*, p. 48.
138 *Original Papers*, etc., Vol. I, pp. 136-37.
139 *Ibid*, pp. 137-38.

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Company's *dastak*.[140] The behaviour of the Company's *gomastas* at Dacca and Luckipur had become extraordinarily insolent.[141] A party of sepoys

140 *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. I, pp. 302-304.

141 Sergeant Brego's Letter to the Governor in Calcutta, dated Bakerganj, 25th May, 1762:—"A gentleman sends a Gomasta here to buy or sell; he immediately looks on himself as sufficient to force every inhabitant either to buy his goods or sell him theirs; and on refusal (in case of non-capacity) a flogging or confinement immediately ensues. This is not sufficient even when willing; but a second force is made use of, which is to engross the different branches of trade to themselves and not to suffer any persons to buy or sell the articles they trade in, and if the country people do it, then a repetition of their authority is put in practice; and again what things they purchase, they think the least they can do is to take them for considerable deal less then another merchant, and often times refuse paying that, and my interfering occasions an immediate complaint ..... This place is growing destitute of inhabitants, every day numbers leave the town to seek a residence more safe; and the very markets, which before afforded plenty, do hardly now produce anything of use, their peons being allowed to force poor people.

Before justice was given in the publick but now every Gomastha is become a judge, and everyone's house a cutcherry, they even pass sentences on the Jemiddars themselves and draw money from them for pretended injuries, such as a quarrel with some of their peons or their having as they assert stole something, which is more likely to have been taken by their own people; but allowing they were robbed, I believe no Gomastha's authority extends so far as to take his own satisfaction on the Government."

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was sent to Silhet by the English gentleman of Dacca on account of some private dispute, " who fired upon and killed one of the principal people of the place, and afterwards made the Zemindar prisoner and forcibly carried him away." The Chief and Council at Dacca wrote at that time " in a towering indignation at the boats being stopped, and their trade and privileges interfered with by the Nawab's Agents, (and) they ordered up Sepahis from Chittagong." But the Calcutta Council replied: " it seems very probable from circumstances in Mr. Hastings' Minute, that the gentlemen's Gomasthas there have been the principal causes of these disturbances; there is reason to fear that Gomasthas and Agents have made use of very unwarrantable practices in their trade," [142] and it also countermanded the marching of the Sepoys from Chittagong.[143]

Those agents and *gomastas* further practised a method of carrying on business called " '*barja*'

[142] *Cf.* " Can that plan be solid where nothing is fixed, and where the English Gomasthas shall be under no control, but regarding themselves far above the Magistrate of the country where they reside, take upon themselves to decide, not only their own disputes with the merchants and inhabitants, but those also of one merchant and inhabitant with another or is it possible that Government can collect their due revenues in such circumstances ? " Proceedings, 1st February, 1763 A.D.

[143] Proceedings, 14th October, 1762 A.D.

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and '*kichaunt*,' that is, forcing the merchants and shop-keepers to take their goods at 30, 40, or 50 per cent. above the market price." [144] The following letter of Muhammad Ali, Collector of Dacca, to the Company's Governor in Calcutta, contains a true picture of the evils of this system :—" In the first place a number of merchants have made interest with the people of the factory, hoist English colours on their boats and carry away their goods under the pretence of their being English property, by which means the Shah-bunder and other customs are greatly determined. Secondly, the Gomasthas of Luckypoor and Dacca factories oblige the merchants, etc., to take tobacco, cotton, iron, and sundry other things, at a price exceeding that of the bazar, and then extort the money from them by force; besides which they take diet money for the peons and make them pay a fine for breaking their agreement. By these proceedings the Aurungs and other places are ruined. Thirdly, the Gomasthas of Luckypoor factory, have taken the talookdars' talooks (the farmer's farm) from the Tashildar by force for their own use ; and will not pay the

'Barja' and 'kichaunt' :

Description of trade abuses,—complaint of Muhammad Ali, Collector of Dacca.

144 A letter from Governor Vansittart to Messrs. Johnstone, Hay and Bolts, dated Mongyr, December 15, 1762.

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rent. At the instigation of some people they, on a matter of complaint, send Europeans and Sepoys with a dustuck into the country, and there create disturbances. They station Chowkeys (toll-houses) at different places, and whatever they find in poor people's houses they cause to be sold and take the money. By these disturbances the country is ruined, and the Reiats cannot stay in their own houses, nor pay the malguzaree (rents). In many places Mr. Chevalier has, by force, established new markets and new factories, and has made false Sepoys on his own part, and they seize whom they want and fine them. By his forcible proceedings many *hauts*, *gauts*, and *perganas* (markets, landing places and fiscal divisions), have been ruined."

Similar complaints from other quarters :

Similar complaints poured in from different quarters. Sayyid Rajab Ali, Zamindar of Burbezzo Paragana, wrote about the middle of the year 1762 :—"Now from Calcutta, Dacca, Chilmary and Rungamatty, numbers of Englishmen and merchants and the people of Mons. Chevalier, bring into the Pergunnah, copper, tothenague, cotton, tinkall, salt, betelnut, tobacco, rice, Muggadhooties, Seringa boats, lack, stick lack, dammer, dried fish, etc., and these people, assuming the name of the Company force the ryots, who never dealt in such commodities,

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to purchase them at an exorbitant price. Besides this, they violently exact large sums for presents and for their peons' expenses, and take at a low rate whatever oil, etc., they buy. By means of these oppressions the merchants, picars, ryots, etc., of the Pergunnah have taken to flight, and the Hauts, Gauts, Gunges and Golas are entirely ruined. Moreover, they prevent the reiats from carrying on their business ; they rob and plunder them wherever they meet them on the road and giving colours and certificates to the merchants of the Pergunnah, who formerly paid duties, they will not suffer any to be taken from them." [145] The same complaints were made by Durlabhram to the Nawab regarding the behaviour of the *gomasta* in Silhet :—" .....but now Mr..... and Chundermun and Coja Muscat English Gomasthas having brought a large quality of salt into the aforesaid Chukla, oblige my Gomasthas by force and oppression to purchase it at an exorbitant price ; and having by violent means taken the buttywood trade into their own hands, they have put a stop to my business, whereby I suffer a great loss: yet the Fougedar has oppressively exacted from me the usual rents, plundering my house and forcing me from my home, and my Gomasthas, by reason of the oppressions of the English Gomasthas and the rigour and violence

145 *Original Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 201-02.

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with which the Malguzaree is exacted, have taken to flight." [146]

The Nawab's patience was tired out and he wrote a strong letter to the Company's Governor in Calcutta.

The Nawab's patience was at last tired out and he complained to the Company's Governor in the following strong terms :—"And this is the way your gentlemen behave; they make a disturbance all over my country, plunder the people, injure and disgrace my servants with a resolution to expose my government to contempt; and from the borders of Hindoostan to Calcutta, make it their business to expose me to scorn. In every Perganah, and every village, they have established ten or twenty new factories, and setting up the colors, and shewing the Dustucks of the Company they use their outmost endeavours to oppress the reiats, merchants and other people of the country. The Dustucks for searching the boats which you formerly favoured me with and which I sent to every Chokey, the Englishmen by no means regard, but bring shame and disgrace upon my people, holding themselves in readiness, to beat and abuse them. Having established these new factories, they carry on such business as the Company never heard of; and every Bengal Gomastah makes a disturbance at every factory, and thinks himself not inferior to the company. In every Perganah, every

146 Translation of a Letter from Durlabhram to the Nawab, *Original Papers, etc.*, Vol. I, p. 203.

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village, and every factory, they buy and sell salt, betelnut, ghee, rice, straw, bamboos, fish, gunnies, ginger, sugar, tobacco, opium, and many other things, more than I can write and which I think it needless to mention. They forcibly take away the goods and commodities of the reiats, merchants, etc., for a fourth part of their value ; and by ways of violence and oppressions, they oblige the reiats, etc., to give five rupees for goods which are worth but one rupee ; and for the sake of five rupees, they bind and disgrace an Assammee, who pays me one hundred rupees malguzaree; and they allow not any authority to my servants. Near four or five hundred new factories have been established in my dominions ; and it is impossible to express what disturbances are made in every factory, and how the inhabitants are oppressed. The officers of every district have desisted from the exercise of their functions ; so that by means of these oppressions and by being deprived of my duties, I suffer a yearly loss of near twenty-five lacks of rupees.....Be kind enough to take these matters into consideration without delay, for they expose my government to scorn, and are the greatest detriments to me."[147]

[147] Letter from the Nawab to the Governor, received, May, 1762 A.D. *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 97-102. Compare with this the letter written by Mr. Hastings to the Governor, dated Bauglepoor (Bhagalpur), April 25, 1762 A.D. *Ibid*, pp. 79-84. Mr. Hastings

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Retaliatory measures on the part of the Nawab's officers;

Sometimes the Nawab's officers also adopted retaliatory measures. On the 7th of October, 1762, Mr. Ellis wrote to the Governor and Council in Calcutta :—" at Ishanabad, the principal cloth Aurung, our Gomasthas, Dillols (*dalals*), etc., have been peremptorily ordered to desist from purchasing, and quit the place. Upon their non-compliance, they have been threatened, and abused in the most vile and gross terms and the washerman employed in whitening our cloths have been actually beat and peons put on them to prevent their going on in their business." [148] The gentlemen at Luckipur [149] and

pointed out in his letter the same evil practices of the Company's *gomastas* and servants.

[148] Copy of a letter from Mr. Ellis to the Governor and Council, dated 7th October, 1762, *Original Papers*, Vol. I, pp. 207-08. The Nawab, however, wrote to the Governor that the washermen were not prevented from working for the Company: " You well know that the washermen pay no duties and that the Amils have no authority to interrupt them or prevent their washing or dressing their cloths. Was this affair really true, he (Mr. Ellis) would have informed Raja Nobit Roy of it and he would immediately have wrote to the Amil about it, but as it is altogether without foundation, he chooses to make a false complaint to you.....". A letter from the Nawab to the Governor, dated Nov. 1, 1762 A.D.

[149] Extract of a letter from the Gentlemen at Luckipur to the Governor and Council, dated 14th October, 1762. *Original Papers*, etc., Vol. I, p. 209.

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Chittagong [150] made similar complaints against the Nawab's people, and the Chief of the Dacca factory also wrote the following to the Governor :—"At every Chowkey our boats are stopped, the people insulted, and the flag used with the utmost and most gross contempt. Our advices, further adding that Mutchulcas have been taken from many inhabitants, prohibiting them on no account to have any connections with the English." [151] In December 1762 Messrs. Johnstone, Hay and Bolts wrote to Mir Sher Ali Khan, Faujdar of Purneah :—"Our Gomastha Ramcharan Das, being gone into those parts, meets with obstruction from you, in whatever business he undertakes ; moreover you have published a prohibition to this effect that whoever shall have any dealing with the English, you will seize his house, and lay a fine upon him. We were surprised at hearing of this affair, because the Royal

[150] Extract of a letter from the Chief and Council of Chittagong to the Governor and Council, dated 14th October, 1762, *Original Papers*, etc., Vol. I, pp. 210-11.

[151] Extract of a letter from the Chief and Council at Dacca to the Governor and Council in Calcutta, dated 8th October, 1762, *Original Papers*. Vol. I, pp. 210-11. The Council in Calcutta wrote to those gentlemen to be careful about their own *gomastas* (referring to the letter of Muhammad Ali) and not to use force without the Council's positive directions, as the President was himself going very soon. Consultations, 18th October and 1st November, 1762, *Original Papers*, Vol. I, pp. 212-14.

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Firmaun which the English nation is possessed of, is violated by this proceeding ; but the English will by no means suffer with patience their Firmaun to be broke through. We therefore expect that, upon the receipt of this letter, you will take off the order you have given to the Ryots and in case of doing it, we will certainly write to the Nawab in the name of the English and send for such an order from him, that you shall restore, fully and entirely, whatever loss the English have sustained, or shall sustain by this obstruction ; and that you shall repent having thus interrupted our business, in despite of the Royal Firmaun, after reading this letter, we are persuaded you will desist from interrupting it, will act agreeably to the rules of friendship, and so that your amity may appear and you will by no means stop the Company's Dustucks." [152]

[152] Verelst, *View of Bengal*, Appendix, pp. 191-92. We should mark the imperious tone of this letter, which was highly condemned by the Court of Directors through their letter to the President and Council at Fort William in Bengal, February 8th, 1764. *Vide ibid*, p. 192. The Nawab of Purneah replied :—"I received your letter from Ramcharan Dass, in which you write that I obstruct your Gomastha in your trade, and have published by beat of drum that whoever deals with English Gomasthas shall be fined or punished, all which I duly observe. What I have to offer on this subject is, that the Gomasthas of English gentlemen did give and receive money at interest to the officers of the King's revenues in my districts, which, by deaths and people running away, caused great outstanding

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By the beginning of the year 1763 Kaisoo Ray, Dewan of Usker (Asgar) Ali Khan, Zilladar of Rajsahi, imprisoned the servants of many of the Company's dependants there.[153] In February

debts, and in consequence quarrels and disputes with my officers, by which the duties and revenues of my Phouzdarry have been quite impaired. That a stop might be put to these quarrels for the good of both your and our business, and that no one of my officers may take on credit from the factories of the English Gomasthas, but deal for ready money, agreeably to the order from the Nawab, I have taken Moochulcas, but am ready to assist the Gomasthas of English gentlemen in everything they desire of me." Proceedings, January 17, 1763 A.D.

Mr. Hastings was of opinion that these retaliatory measures of the Nawab's people were provoked by the evil practices of the Company's *gomastas*. His opinion was expressed in the following:—"As I have formerly lived amongst the country people in a very inferior station (a junior servant of the Company at the silk Aurungs) and at a time when we were subject to the most slavish dependence on the government; and have met with the greatest indulgence, and even respect, from the Zemindars and officers of the Government, I can, with the greater confidence, deny the justice of this opinion; and add further from repeated experience that if our people, instead of erecting themselves into lords and oppressors of the country, confine themselves to an honest and fair trade and submit themselves to the lawful authority of the government, they will be everywhere courted and respected." Hastings' opinion in the Consultations of 1st March, 1763, *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 354-55.

153 Letter from the Governor to the Nawab, January 22, 1763 A. D.

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1763, some boats laden with salt, belonging to Messrs. Lushington and Amphlett, and provided with the *bukshbunder's*[154] pass and the Company's *dastak* were stopped, while going to Patna, near Rajmahal by Kutub Alum, Faujdar of that place.[155] About the same time some saltpetre of the Company, coming from Gazipur loaded on bullocks, was pulled off from the bullocks' backs by the Nawab's amil at Maugy in sarkar Saran; the Daroga of Seisun (?) stopped a boat laden with saltpetre belonging to the Company and took it out; and the Faujdar of Rajmahal stopped four boats loaded with betel-nut, though these had *dastaks* from the Chief of the Dacca Factory, and demanded for duties.[156] Mahammad Ali, the Nawab's Collector at Dacca, also adopted some strong measures. He wrote to Abdulla, amil of Sundeep Paragana, not "to suffer a single Englishman in the country, and to punish whosoever shall take upon himself the name of an Englishman." On the death of Nehool, an old *dalal* of the Company at Dacca, Mahammad Ali "put peons on his house and laid claim to his effects in wrong of an infant" who appealed to the English in the Dacca

154 "A harbour or custom master. Also a custom house, a port. The office of customs at Hoogly."

155 Letter from the Governor to Kutub Alum, 10th February, 1763.

156 Letter from the Governor to the Nawab, February 12, 1763.

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factory for protection.[157] The Chief of the Dacca factory sent a party of sepoys "for the security of the house" and his step was approved by the members of the Council in Calcutta, who sent a letter to Mahammad Ali, "warning him to desist from any such proceeding in future." Mr. Cartier, Chief of the Dacca factory, wrote to Muhammad Ali :—"Sir, the strange and violent proceedings of the different Sickdars, Zemindars, and Chowkeedars in the district of Dacca in stopping the English trade, plundering their Gomasthas and servants, and affronting their colours, oblige me, as Chief of the Company's affairs at Dacca, to apply to you for satisfaction for these insults and to demand a reason for such an extraordinary conduct. I can scarcely believe, Sir, that these actions can be the result of your orders and much less Cossim Aly Khan's; but as you cannot be ignorant of the secret springs of them, I require of you a positive explanation concerning this matter. You must be sensible of the danger an invasion of the privileges granted to the English must be attended with and the resentment we have it in our power to show, and have shown in instances of the like nature. I choose to communicate my sentiments by letter, well knowing the many mistakes that happen in sending and

157 Proceedings, February 3, 1763 A. D.

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answering messages, the sense of them very often being perverted.'' [158]

Sayyid Jalal Bokory, the Nawab's *chowkidar* at Shahbunder, demanded an additional duty of Rs. 3,250 from Mr. Senior, who had to pay the duty for obtaining a pass to carry on 4,000 maunds of salt into the Shahbunder. He stopped the boats at every *ghat* and taking an account of goods, demanded as much duty as he liked, and plundered the oarsmen and the helmsmen of all their effects. The amil of Rangpur demanded duties on cloth, silk and all kinds of goods, and imprisoned the *dalals* and *pykers* of the Company at Shengunge, in the district of Dinajpur. Ramnath Bhaduri, Naib of that place, set a guard of ten *barkandazes* [159] over each of the six English *gomastas* and took money from them under the pretence that they must contribute their share to remove the *fakirs*.[160]

Mir Kasim's attention to English complaints before the final breach.

It should be noted that before his conflict with the English Mir Kasim paid heed to certain cases of complaints of the *gomastas* and servants of the Company. He

158 Proceedings, 17th January 1763.

159 "A matchlockman, but commonly applied to a native of Hindustan, armed with a sword and shield, who acts as doorkeeper, watchman, guard or escort." *Wilson's Glossary*, p. 65.

160 Letter from the Governor to the Nawab, March 7,

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wrote in his letter to the President, received 10th February, 1762 :—"At this time Mr. Ellis, the Chief of Patna, writes, that the Purnea and other Faujdars molest the Company's business. I have therefore wrote expressly to the Purnea Faujdar, etc., not to interrupt the Company's trade, but always to assist them. I therefore wrote to the Bengal Faujdars and others not to impede the Company's business in any respect, and to advise you of anything that came before them. I am at great distance ; therefore should anything happen write to the Faujdars and others, and they will act as shall most tend to benefit the Company's trade and the business of my Subaddarry." We also find that Turrut Sing, Amildar of Gungypore (Jangipur), being convicted of killing Mr. Gray's *gomasta*, was sentenced to hanging at the place where the violence had been committed, and Shijr Ali, the Faujdar, for "endevouring to screen him," and for other 'bad behaviour' towards the English *gomasthas*, "was dismissed from the Government of Purneah." [161]

1763. These *Fakirs* or *Sannyasis* were often very turbulent in those parts of Bengal. Rennel in his *Journals* refers to a skirmish between his own men and some *Sanngasis* in Baar (near Bhutan).

[161] *Original Papers*, Vol. I, p. 139. *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 190-94. *Cf.* Another letter from the Governor and Mr. Hastings to the Council, dated

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How the Council in Calcutta and the Nawab of Bengal tried to arrive at some settlement ;

It is important to know how the President and the Council in Calcutta and the Nawab also tried to remove these disturbances and how far their measures and motives were just and impartial. From March to June 1762, vigorous and lengthy debates took place in the Council on the subject of trade, the nature and extent of it, the powers of the English factors and the *gomastas*, and their right of using force in their own concerns. Variety of opinions prevailed but all felt that redress was urgently needed. At last, it was agreed that the Governor, attended by Mr. Hastings, should pay a visit to the Nawab, and should regulate affairs with him. Accordingly they set out from Calcutta on 12th October, 1762, and arrived at Murshidabad on 3rd November.[162] The Nawab was then at Mongyr, where the Governor arrived on 30th November. After certain discussions and enquiries of various kinds, they agreed upon the following points[163] :—"*(1) For the Company's imports and exports, the Company's dustuck (pass) shall be granted*

Mission of Vansittart and Hastings to the Nawab of Bengal ;—their arrival at Mongyr ;—

points of their agreement with the Nawab—

Mongyr, December 15, 1762 A.D., *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 150-64.

[162] Letter from the Governor to the Council, 19th November, 1762.

[163] The plan of these regulations corresponds in a

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and respect should be paid to it. (2) For the private trade the pass of the government shall be given. (3) At the time of taking out the last-mentioned pass the duties shall be paid according to the rat s which shall be annexed to the agreement. (4) The duties shall be paid once for all, so that there should be no delays on the road, or at the place of sale. (5) If any frauds shall be committed, notice shall be immediately sent to the nearest English Factory, and to the nearest officer of the government. (6) If any person attempts to pass goods, without a dustuck for inland trade such boats or goods, so attempted to be passed clandestinely, shall be seized and confiscated and notice be given to the nearest English Factory, and to the officer of the government. (7) Goods without a dustuck attempted to be clandestinely passed in company with boats or goods having a dustuck—such goods or boats, so attempted to be passed clandestinely, shall be seized and confiscated. (8) The gomasthas in every place, shall carry on their trade freely, and as merchants. In case of any dispute on either side, application shall be made to the officer of the government, and justice shall be done. (9) If the Gomastha thinks himself aggrieved, he shall complain to

great measure with that of 18th May, 1762. *Vide* a letter from Mr. Hastings to the Governor, May 18, 1762 A.D., *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 90-95.

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his principal, and his principal according to custom shall appear to the Presidency, and redress shall be obtained."

Rates fixed at 9 p.c. on the prime cost at the places where the goods could be procured,—

The rates, mentioned in article three, were fixed at 9 p.c. on the prime cost, at the places where the goods could be procured. It should be noted that these rates were less than what had been paid by the English themselves in their private trade at Luckipur,[164] *e.g.*, on salt Rs. 9-14-3 pies per 100 maunds, tobacco Rs. 0-4-0 per maund.[165] It was also much less than what had been usually paid by other merchants in their private trade. Moreover, by this arrangement "the inconvenience was avoided (by the Company) of making a diversity of payments which other merchants were subject to."[166] Haji Mustafa, translator of the Seir-ul-Mutakherin, has remarked :—

advantageous for the Company.

Haji Mustafa's remark.

"The fact is, however, that in reality, and with the condition

164 A letter from the Council to the Governor, dated 15th November, 1762, *Original Papers*, etc., Vol. I, p. 217.

165 A letter from the Gentlemen at Luckipur to the Council, dated 6th November, 1762. *Ibid*, p. 218.

166 "In my way down, I took an account from the agents of some Patna and Hugely merchants of what they had paid, and were liable to pay for the salt under their charge, by which you will perceive that the Sircary

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in appearance submitted to by Vansittart, but in reality annexed thereto by the Governor, the English had a complete advantage over the natives. For whilst these were liable to that infinity of small duties and stoppages over the waters of Bengal (duties which independently of the stoppages, amounted altogether to full 25 p.c.) the English themselves were to pay 10 p.c. for once and all; and that duty, once paid, their boats were exempted from all further stoppages and searches; an exemption which cannot be rated at less than 13 p. c. more; so that whilst the Company's public trade remained free, boundless and sacred, the private trade of their servants, which to that day had never existed, was admitted as lawful under the single duty of 10 p.c., which 10 p.c. would, in time, become only nominal." [167]

At the time of his departure Mr. Vansittart told the Nawab that he should pass orders on his officers directing them to act in accordance with those regulations, when the orders along with those of the President and with circular letters from the Council should be forwarded from

(government) duties only, without reckoning the Dustore taken at the several Chokeys amount by the lowest of the several information, to more than 25 rupees per 100 maunds." A letter from the Governor to the Council, dated 15th January, 1763. *Ibid*, pp. 239-40.

167 *Seir*, Vol. II, p. 469.

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Calcutta to the factories.[168] He promised that he would try his level best to get the consent of the Council to these regulations. But the Nawab, "confiding in that kind of promise conceived the hopes of keeping up his pretensions for duties; somuch so, that after some time had elapsed, he wrote to his officers everywhere to give them notice of the agreement he expected and to put them upon their guards; lest meanwhile and until the reglement should come up, the English private traders might find means to evade the custom and to escape duty free." But the customs officers and toll-men could not act in the right spirit of the instructions and were not able to "keep such a secret locked up in their breasts." In fact, oppositions and stoppages commenced in many places, and the "veil was torn away at once in two places at Azimabad, where Mr. Ellis, Chief of the Factory, was highly incensed against the Nawab, and zealously attached to Mr. Amyatt, and at Jahangirnagar (Dacca) where Mr. Boston held a similar office. These two men equally incensed and equally impatient of restraint, and both unable to endure any more, sent a force, which seized the Nawab's officers and brought them prisoners to the English

The Nawab hastily issued instructions to his officers,—

beginning of conflicts.

168 *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 163-64.

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factories, with intent to have them tried and punished by the Council of Calcutta, and to throw the blame of their conduct directly upon the Nawab and indirectly upon Vanisttart." [169]

The members of the Council in Calcutta guided by self-interest and feelings of personal rivalries;

At that critical moment, the members of the Council, with two or three exceptions, were guided mainly by considerations of self-interest and feelings of personal rivalries. So they at once construed the arrangement between the Nawab and Mr. Vansittart to be an attack upon their privileges and threw out all sorts of invectives against both of them.[170] Major Carnac was desired to assist the Council so that he "might contribute his censure upon the President's regulations," and a resolution was taken to call down all the members of the Council from the subordinate factories to the Presidency.[171] At the same time the subordinate English factories daily sent to the Council fresh complaints of the interruptions on their business with such exaggerations as served to widen the breach. It was urged that their weavers could not be protected because of the President's orders against protecting the dependants of the Nawab's

169 *Seir*, Vol. II, pp. 445-46 ; *Original Papers*, etc., Vol. I, pp. 250-52.

170 *Ibid. Vide* the Governor's Minute of 1st February, 1763, in which he answers the objections to the regulations.

171 Extract from consultations of 17th January, 1763.

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government.[172] The Nawab also sent to the President similar complaints against the servants of the Company.[173] The Council decided on 1st March, 1763, that "they had a right to trade in salt, betelnut, and every other article of inland trade, duty-free and with the Company's Dustuck, equally with the foreign trade." It was further decided that a duty of two and a half per cent. on salt should be paid to the Nawab, "in conformity to the usual practice, not as the Nawab's right, but as an indulgence to him from the Board."[174]

their decision of 1st March, 1763.

The attitude of the members of the Council on this occasion was highly uncompromising. The duty of 9 p. c. on the prime cost of the goods would have been "a very easy and advantageous accommodation for the English dealers in this trade;" and as the

Their attitude highly uncompromising.

[172] "The defendants of the country government are plainly those who hold offices, trusts, or rents under the government, and there is an established distinction between them and the weavers, who are regarded as dependants of the merchants that employ them; and this is a distinction well known to all but those who through passion will not know it."

[173] Letter from the Nawab to the President, 22nd February, 1763, *Original Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 94-95.

[174] Consultations, 1st March, 1763, *Original Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 75-87; *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, p. 417.

Cf. "and this as a compliment, a favour, a consideration, not a right."

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Nawab had "consented to accept that as an equivalent for all demands," the compliance of the members of the Council with it would have given them a confirmed right to what had hitherto been always disputed.[175] Moreover, as has been already pointed, it would have placed them in a more privileged position than the native merchants.[176] But all prudence and judgment vanish away when hatred, rivalry and selfishness reign supreme.

Day by day affairs took a serious turn. The Dacca Factors informed the Council of a fray between the officers of the government and a party of sepoys that had been sent to release some boats, stopped near Jafarganj. The English gentlemen at Patna also wrote that they had sent an officer with three companies of sepoys to Mow for removing the restrictions on the Company's trade at that place.[177] Being tired of this anomalous state of things,[178] the Nawab

175 *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 414-16.

Cf. Vansittart's letter to Messrs. Johnston, Hay and Bolts, Dec. 15, 1762 A.D.

176 *Vide ante.*

177 Copy of a letter from the Chief and Council at Patna to the Governor and Council, dated 6th March, 1763. *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 109. For further details, *vide ibid.*

178 *Cf.* "It appeared that an exemption from duties had thrown the whole trade of the country into the hands of the English. This, however, was the least evil. The

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issued a parawanah abolishing all duties on inland trade for two years.[179] The Nawab fully expressed his point of view in this matter in his letter to the Council, dated 22nd March, 1763 :—" The affair of the duty is as follows : on account of the oppression of the

The Nawab abolished all duties on inland trade for two years ;—explanation of his measure.

country Government was destroyed by the violence of their agents ; and individual tyranny succeeded to national arrangement. In the general confusion all who were disposed to plunder assumed the authority of our name, usurped the seats of justice, and carried on what they called, a trade, by violence and oppression. The Nawab's officer either fled before them or joining the invader, divided the spoil. The barrier of the country government once broken down, it became impossible to stop the inundation. Mahomedan, Portuguese and Armenian alike, nay, every illiterate mariner who would escape from a ship, erected our flag, and acted as lord of the district around him." Verelst, *View of Bengal*, p. 106.

[179] " Perwannah from Mir Casim to Raja Nobet Roy, dated the 19th Shaaban, or 5th March, 1763 :—

"*Having been certainly informed that the greater part of the Merchants of my country have suffered considerable losses and have laid aside all traffic, sitting idle and unemployed in their houses.*

Therefore with a view to the welfare and quiet of this kind of people, I have caused all duties and customs, chowkeydaree Mangan, collections upon new built boats and other lesser taxes by land or by water, for two years to come, to be removed, and my sunnud is accordingly sent to enforce it." Proceedings, March 22, 1763.

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English Gomasthas, there has not as much a single farthing been collected by way of duties. Nay, so far from it, you have combined with some of my people and taken penalties from others. And many merchants who ought to pay customs, have carried their goods duty free through your protection. Upon this account I have entirely given up the collection of duties, and removed all Chowkeys wheresoever established. For why should I subject my character to be reproached without cause on account of duties ? If any one of my people insist on duties, I shall severely punish him. As to what you write of your grounding your rights upon the Firmaund and former sunnuds, I have been twenty or thirty years in this country and am perfectly well acquainted with the nature thereof. But you ought to remember that your Gomasthas until the time of Meer Mahomed Jaffar Khan, traded only on some certain articles. Nay, although I stood your friend, you were unable to provide ten or twenty timbers from Chittagong for building ; but now in my administration, your Gomasthas make so many disturbances, and are guilty of so great injuries that I cannot enumerate them. Judge therefore, from these circumstances, who is the oppressor, and who the oppressed.'"[180]

[180] *Original Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 138-40.

It should be noted here that the President, in his letter to the Council, dated 14th December, 1762 (*Original*

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As soon as the Nawab's parawanah for abolishing inland duties had been out, it was resolved by a majority in the Council that "this exemption was a breach of the Company's privileges and that the Nawab should be positively required to recall it, and collect duties as before from the country merchants and all other persons who had not the protection of the Company's Dustuck." [181]

Majority in the Council become furious.

The President and Mr. Hastings disagreed with the Council and pointed out that "the Nazim of every Province has a right to do anything for the relief of the merchants trading under his protection without waiting for an order from the (Imperial) Court; besides there is at this time no court, nor has been for some years, and therefore the Nazim must of necessity manage their several governments as they shall judge best for

The President and Mr. Hastings disagreed with the Council;

Papers, etc., Vol. I, pp. 222-28), mentioned that in course of his conversation with the Nawab on the subject of inland trade and duties, the latter had observed that "if the English Gomasthas were permitted to trade in all parts and all commodities custom free, his customs would be of so little value to him, that it would be much more for his interest to lay trade entirely open; and collect no customs upon any kind of merchandise which would draw a number of merchants into his country and at the same time it would cut off the principal subject of the disputes which had disturbed the good understanding between us."

181 *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 124.

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the general good. And if either the Nawab Serajoo Dowla, Jaffer Ally Khan, or Cossim Aly Khan have a right to give up to us those duties which their predecessors received, or permit us to trade in articles we were before excluded from; of course they have a right also to make regulations in favour of trade in general."[182] The Nawab being strongly determined to take off customs in general and to lay trade entirely open, sent the following reply to the arguments of the members of the Council in personal correspondence to Mr. Vansittart:—"It was notorious that merchants of all sorts made it a practice to pass their own goods under the name of English agents: and that as a release of duties to the latter would in fact amount to a general exemption also to most of the former, save only a few wretches too obscure to afford the expense of purchasing protectors, and too poor to afford duties that would be worth perception; he had therefore taken the part to suppress all customs and duties whatever, and to render the exemption general since as long as the principal merchants could find means to pass duty free, under the English mask, it would be hard to torment a few poor people who could submit to duties, but whose contributions would never repay the charges of perception. That as to the order

The Nawab's reply;

[182] Proceedings, March 24, 1763.

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of dismissing the English agents, prisoners in his camp, it was an injunction vain and absurd; since the English having first seized and confined his officers, these, of course, ought to be released first before the others could be dismissed at all."[183] The Court of Directors took a just view of the situation and strongly condemned the action and behaviour of the Council in Calcutta in their letter, dated 30th December, 1763 :—"If what is all stated is fact, it is natural to think that the Nawab tired out and disgusted with the ill usage he has received, has taken this extraordinary measure finding that his authority and government are set at naught and trampled upon by the unprecedented behaviour of our servants and the agents employed by them in the several parts of the Nawab's dominions. If we are right in our conjecture, we positively direct, as you value our service, that you do immediately acquaint the Nawab, in the Company's name, that we disapprove of every measure that has been taken in real prejudice to his authority and government particularly with respect to the wronging him in his revenues by the shameful abuse of Dustucks; and you are further to inform him that you look upon his and the Company's interest to be so connected that we wish for nothing more than to have everything

Views of the Court of Directors ;—their letter of 30th December, 1763.

183 *Seir*, Vol. II, p. 453.

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put on such a footing that the utmost harmony may be promoted and kept up between." [184]

It is difficult to understand how those members of the Council in Calcutta could base their right to internal trade, free of all customs and duties, on the Firman of 1716-17.[185] The Firman was never intended to throw open the internal trade of Bengal (*i.e.*, trade from place to place within the country) in the commodities of the country (*e.g.*, salt, betel-nut and tobacco) to the servants of a foreign trading Company, to the prejudice of the interests of the country merchants, as well as of the Nawab's revenues. Neither Siraj-ud-dowla nor Mir Jafar did understand it to be so.[186] Certainly no sound principle of International Law can allow such treaties of commerce between two contracting parties as would benefit one to the utter disadvantage of the other. The Court of Directors expressed their sentiments on this point in their letter to the Council in Calcutta, dated 26th April, 1765:—"We do not mean to enter into a discussion, respecting the political conduct of our late Governor (Vansittart) and his Council; but must say that an unbounded thirst after riches

Wrong interpretation of the Firman of 1717 by the Council in Calcutta.

Opinion of the Court of Directors on the Firman;

184 Wheeler, *Early Records of British India*, pp. 311-12.

185 *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 271-72.

186 *Vide ante.*

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seems to have possessed the whole body of our servants to that degree, that they have lost all sight of justice to the country government and of their duty to the Company. In reading the opinions of the several members of the late Council respecting illegal trade, by which they mean the articles of salt, betel-nut, and tobacco, we are astonished to find those among them who pretend to found their rights on the Firmans. Treaties of Commerce are understood for the mutual benefit of the contracting parties. Is it then possible to suppose that the Court of Delhy by conferring the privilege of trading free of customs, could mean an internal trade in the commodities of their own country, at that period unpractised and unthought of by the English, to the detriment of their revenues and to the ruin of their own merchants. We do not find such a construction ever was heard of until our own servants first invented it and afterwards supported it by violence; neither could it be claimed by the subsequent treaties with Mir Jaffer (June 1757) or Cossim Aly (July 1763) which were never understood to give one additional privilege of trade beyond what the Firman expressed. In short the specious arguments used by those who pretended to set up a right to it convince us that they did not want judgment but virtue, to withstand the temptation of suddenly amassing a great fortune, although acquired by

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means incompatible with the peace of the country, and their duty to the Company."[187] The remission of all duties on the internal trade in the case of foreign traders, while it was realised from the country merchants, would have practically amounted to a stoppage of commerce by the latter. Further, the East India Company, a collective body of merchants incorporated, procured from the Mughal Emperor freedom from duties (except at the fort of Surat) for all goods belonging to the collective body. They did not lay out the money of the community for the benefit of the private merchants, but for the benefit of the Company. So, the true intent and meaning of the Firman was to give the Company "a free trade, clear of all customs, in articles of commerce to be imported and exported by shipping." It was such commerce, from which mutual benefit could be derived by both the Company and the kingdom of the Nawab, that was intended by the Firman.[188] The members of the Council in Calcutta, with few exceptions, interpreted it in a manner which suited their interests best. It was natural that they entertained feelings of enmity against Mir Kasim, who sought to strike

187 Verelst, *View of Bengal*, Appendix, pp. 128-29.

188 A letter from the Governor and Mr. Hastings to the Council, dated 15th December, 1762, *Original Papers*, Vol. I, pp. 222-24.

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a blow at the sources of their income from private trade in order to protect the interests of the native merchants of Bengal. From interchange of complaints and haughty words through letters, the two parties were drawn into battles, which resulted in the defeat and expulsion of Mir Kasim from Bengal.

Defeat and expulsion of Mir Kasim.

After this Mir Jafar was reinstalled as the Nawab of Bengal. The Council in Calcutta concluded a treaty with him on 10th July, 1763, by which it was agreed that "the English shall carry on their trade by means of their own Dustucks, free from all duties, taxes and impositions, in all parts of the country excepting the salt, on which a duty of two and a half per cent. is to be levied on the Rowana or Houghly market price; wherein it is further agreed, that the late Perwannahs, issued by Cossim Aly Khan (Mir Kasim) granting to all merchants the exemption of all duties for the space of two years shall be reversed and called in, and the duties collected as before."[189] This left the country open for the oppressions and plunderings of the Company's *gomastas*, to the acute sufferings of its people and merchants.

Reinstallation of Mir Jafar,—his treaty with the Company of 10th July, 1763.

Oppressions of the *gomastas* increased adding to the sufferings of the country merchants and people.

189 Verelst, *View of Bengal*, Appendix, p. 128; *Bengal and Madras Papers*, Vol. III.

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Mir Jafar sent the following representations [190] to the Council in Calcutta, through Major Adams, for regulating the internal trade of the country :—

"*As there are factories of the English Company at Cassimbazar, Dacca, Patna and other places and Chiefs and Councillors are there, whatever Dustucks there may be for trade let them be established under the seal of the English Company. And let them not interfere, nor grant recommendations in the affairs of the Revenues of the country as it is a means of weakening the authority of my officers.*

Mir Jafar's representations to the Council in Calcutta for the regulation of internal trade.

Sepoys and Liscarries in the name of the Company go into the country and oppress the Ryots. If they are sent into the country for the Company's business let them have a certificate in the seal of the English Councillor and if they go into the country without a certificate and make a disturbance let them be punished.

Let not the English gomasthas take possession of and set up their authority in any of the Zamindaree, or milky lands granted by the King rent free, or for a very trifling consideration, nor receive money for protection called Meraein nor hold any Farms : and whoever has taken possession of any lands let him relinquish them and let not protection be granted to the Dependents of the Sircar.

190 *Bengal Secret Consultations*, Fort William, 2nd January, 1764, I. R. D. (Foreign).

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Let there be Dustucks and the Company's seal with the boats loaded with silver and goods and let them pass and repass giving copies to the Chowkey according to custom.

With regard to the gomasthas of the English Company who are in different parts of the country excepting for the business of the English Company and Councillors let them not for their own affairs and concerns send sepoys upon the Ryots, nor oppress them, force them to purchase their goods and if any dispute shall arise let them make it known to the officer of the Sircar and have it settled by him.

His complaints against the conduct of the Patna Factors.

On 6th January, 1764, the Nawab sent a letter to the Council complaining of the many obstructions that his officers had met with in the province of Bihar from the English gentlemen at the Patna factory.[191] The Council being desirous of introducing certain necessary regulations for preventing future disputes in the country, wrote to the Chief of the Patna factory repeating, along with other instructions, the prohibition which had been already laid down

The Council's instructions to the Patna Factory.

"that no persons or their dependants residing under the Company's flag are to be permitted to hold Gaunges, Rents or any

191 *Bengal Secret Consultations*, Fort William, 19th January, 1764, I.R.D. (Foreign).

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other offices from the country government." [192] The Chief of the Patna factory replied to the Council on 3rd February that the orders of the Council had been duly obeyed and "that no Gentlemen of the Factory or their dependants hold either Gunge, Rent or other offices from the country government....." [193]

Sufferings of the people in other parts of the country.

But in other parts of the country, such as, Cassimbazar, Rangpur, Dinajpur, etc., the people were labouring under "unlawful proceedings of many private European agents and their Gomasthas." [194] The following letter from the *vakïl* (representative) of the Zamindar of Buzzoorgomepore (?) gives a true picture of the condition to which the internal trade of the country had been reduced —"The Pergunnah of Buzzoorgomeopore, etc., in the Zemindary of my master. By reason of the oppressions of the Factors of the Company and many other English traders of whom underneath is a list, all inhabitants are fled. The people of the Factors take from the markets what they please at half price, cut down Bamboos and Trees belonging to the inhabitants and take them away

192 *Ibid.*

193 *Bengal Secret Consultations*, Fort William, 13th February, 1764, I.R.D. (Foreign).

194 *Bl. St. Cons.*, 30th April, 1764, I. R. D. (Foreign).

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by force, if any complains, they punish him for it. They press the inhabitants and carry them into the woods of Sundarbun, paying them only half their wages. They take possession of lands in the Sunderbun and make Tafsels of salt for which they pay no rents. They seize the salt of Tafsels of the Pergunah and of the inhabitants. They force the inhabitants to take tobacco, salt and other articles and refuse to pay the legal duties on the Trade which they carry on. If we demand a sight of the Company's Dustuck they beat us with Bamboos, some of them pretend that they have been Robbed; and insist on our making restitution placing peons upon us and putting us to great expense. They judge causes, and impose and exact fines. They send peons, and seize the Naib of the Pergunnah taking for a Tullabana (Peons' Fees) one rupee every day. They grant guards to many of the Taluckdars and Mollungess in the country by which means we are prevented from collecting the King's Revenues and many of the inhabitants take shelter in the Factories and thereby avoid paying the rents. There is little chunam (lime) made within the distance of four days' journey from hence, the whole quantity made within the Pergunnah not exceeding 200 maunds. Notwithstanding Mr. Dobbries has established two Factories within my Pergunnah committing every species of Injury and oppressing and violating the women of the Inhabitants and erecting Factories

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in places where none were ever before, drives away the Inhabitants and upon the information of many people he takes upon him to recover debts of Five and Ten years standing—whereof I request that you will grant me a Perwannah that no one may be allowed to oppress the Inhabitants that whosever has not the Company's Dustuck may be obliged to pay duties and orders be sent to the people of the Factories that they do not send out Peons into the country without the knowledge of the Zemindar, and whatever affairs they transact that they give the Naib Zamindar a copy of the Dustuck by which they are authorised and that for such for which they have no Dustuck they pay the King's revenues accruing from them." [195] There is no wonder that the Select Committee in 1767 described the situation of Bengal in 1765 in the following language :—"We beheld a presidency divided, headstrong and licentious; a government without nerves, a treasury without money, and service without subordination, discipline or public spirit. We may add that amidst a general stagnation of useful industry and of licensed commerce, individuals were accumulating immense riches, which they had ravished from the insulted prince, and his helpless people, who groaned under the united pressure of discontent, poverty and oppression."[195a]

195 *Bl. St. Cons.*, 7th May, 1764.

195a Verelst, *Vices in Bengal*, Appendix, p. 471.

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Instructions of the Court of Directors.

The Court of Directors in their letter, dated 8th February, 1764, informed the Governor and Council in Bengal that "from the receipt of this letter, a final and effectual end be forthwith put to the Inland Trade in Salt, Betelnut, Tobacco and in all other articles whatsoever produced and consumed in the country; and that all European and other Agents, or Gomosthas, who have been concerned in such Trade, be immediately ordered down to Calcutta, and not suffered to return or be replaced as such, by any other persons.

That as our Phirmaund Privileges of being Duty-free are certainly confined to the Company's Export and Import Trade only, you are to have recourse to, and keep within, the Liberty therein stipulated, and given, as nearly as can possibly be done. But as by the connivance of the Bengal Government and constant usage, the Company's Government servants have had the same Benefit as the Company, with respect to their Export and Import Trade, we are willing they should enjoy the same; and that Dustucks be granted accordingly; but herein the most effectual care is to be taken, that no excesses or abuses are suffered upon any account whatsoever, nor Dustucks granted to any other than our Government servants as aforesaid. However, notwithstanding any of our former orders, no writer is to have the benefit of a Dustuck, until he has served his full Time of

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Five years in that Station: Free Merchants and others are not entitled to, or to have the benefit of the Company's Dustucks, but are to pay the usual Duties.

As no Agents or Gomasthas are to reside, on Account of private Trade, at any of the Inland Parts of the country, all business on account of licensed private Trade is to be carried on by, and through the means of, the Company's Covenant servants, residing at the several subordinate Factories, as has been usual." [196]

Attention of the Council in Calcutta to the regulation of the internal trade.

For some time after the receipt of this letter, the regulation of the internal trade of Bengal engaged the attention of the Council in Calcutta. [197] The Council tried to put some restraints "upon those excesses which either ignorance or passion or self-interest" had led the English agents to commit in the country. [198] Those agents were practically under no law, because the Charter of the Company did not authorise the Company's Courts "to take cognisance of any crimes they might commit in those parts," and it had been also "laid down as a

196 *Bengal and Madras Papers*, Vol. III; Wheeler, *Early Records of British India*, pp. 311-14.

197 Letter to Anselm Beaumont, Resident at Midnapur, dated 3rd October, 1764. *Midnapur District Records*, pp. 19-20.

198 *Bl. St. Cons.*, 3rd May, 1764.

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fundamental principle that the country Government shall have no power of them." [199] It was, therefore, resolved by the Council on 3rd May, 1764, that "all the Europeans, Portugese, Natives, and Armenian agents which are now up the country shall have notice given them to settle their concerns so as to return to Calcutta by the 30th November, and that after that time no European shall be permitted to go up the country under any pretence whatsoever or any other agent be employed in our own Trade but Bengal Natives. With respect to the practice of carrying on the Inland trade by Force (called Burja or Guchaount) it is a practice which we entirely disapprove, and in order to put a stop to it as soon as possible it is agreed to send directions to Dacca, Rungepore and Malda to prohibit it in the districts under the Factory but to do it with such care and discretion as not to affect the Company's Investment as we do not mean to invalidate the right derived to the Company from their Phirmaund always held over their own weavers." [200] All the members of the Council were not unanimous in their opinion on these resolutions ; [201] but it was at last decided in July 1764, that all European agents should be recalled,

199 *Ibid.*

200 *Ibid.*

201 *Bl. St. Cons.*, 21st July, 1764. For details about the opinion of the members, *vide* Appendix.

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and that they should leave their respective places of residence in the country in such time as to arrive in Calcutta by the 31st of December.[202] The members also thought that a scheme should be formed for carrying on the inland tradei n conformity with the orders of the Court of Directors.[203] We find in Consultations, 17th October, 1764, that the Council in Calcutta proposed the regulation of confining the trade of their servants in the article of salt to the capital cities of Patna, Dacca and Murshidabad on paying the Nawab a duty of two and a half per cent. This could not by any means "obviate the Nawab's objections arising from the distress of the poor and the injury to his revenues," for while the Company's people had

202 *Ibid.*

203 *Bengal and Madras Papers*, Vol. II; Verelst, *View of Bengal*, Appendix, p. 128. At a general meeting of the Court of Proprietors held on the 18th of May, 1764, it was pointed out by several members that the servants of the Company in India "ought not to be deprived of such precious advantages." The Court, therefore, resolved, "That it be recommended to the Court of Directors to consider the orders sent to Bengal relative to the trade of the Company's servants in salt, betelnut and tobacco, and to regulate this important point, either by restrictions framed at home, or by referring it to the Governor and Council of Fort William in such a manner as may prevent all future Disputes betwixt the Soubah and the Compnay." Verelst, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

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to pay two and a half per cent. the country people had to pay twenty or perhaps forty per cent.[204]

Article 5 of the Treaty of 20th February, 1765.

The fifth article of the treaty concluded by the President and Council in Calcutta with Nazim-ud-dowla on 20th February, 1765, confirmed "to the English the privilege granted them by their phirmaund and several Husbulhookums, carrying on their trade by means of their own Dustuck free from all Duties, Taxes and Impositions in all parts of the country, excepting the article on salt, on which a duty of two half per cent. is to be levied on the Rowna, or Houghley Market price."[205]

According to the orders of the Court of Directors, as contained in their letter of 1st June, 1764, the Select Committee in its meeting of 10th August, 1765, when Mr. William Sumner and Mr. Verelst were present, took into consideration the subject of the inland trade in salt, betelnut and tobacco. It decided that the following plan,—which was esteemed to be the "most

[204] *Ibid*, Appendix, pp. 130-31.

[205] Court's Letter to Bengal, dated 19th February, 1766. In this letter the Court of Directors complained that they considered this arrangement "as an express Breach and Violation of our Orders and as a determined Resolution to sacrifice the Interest of the Company and the peace of the country to lucrative and selfish views."

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correspondent with the Company's Orders and conducive to the Ends which they have in view when they require that the Trade shall be put upon such a footing as may appear most equitable for the benefit of their servants, least liable to produce disputes with the Country Government and wherein their own interest and that of the Nabob, shall at the same time be properly attended to and considered "—should be carried into execution:—"1st, That the Trade shall be carried on by an exclusive Company, formed for that purpose and consisting of all those who may be deemed justly entitled to share. That a proper fund shall be raised by a Loan at interest, for the supply and support of the same; and that it shall commence in the month of September ensuing or as soon after as may be found most convenient. 2ndly, That all Salt, Betelnut and Tobacco produced in or imported into Bengal, shall be purchased by this established Company and public advertisement shall be issued, strictly prohibiting all other Persons whatever, who are dependent on our Government, to deal in these Articles.

Establishment of monopoly in salt, betelnut, and tobacco.

3rdly, That application shall be made to the Nabob to issue the like prohibition to all his officers and subjects, of the Districts where any quantity of either of these Articles is manufactured or produced.

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4thly, That the salt shall be purchased by contract on the most reasonable Terms, giving the preference to the factories of Dacca, Chittagong, Burdwan, and Midnapore, for the produce of their respective Districts to the Fousdar of Houghly, and the other Zamindars, for the produce of Inglee, Tumlook, Mysidole, etc., and to such persons as may offer the most reasonable proposals, for the quantity produced in Calcutta Lands.

5thly, That the betelnut and tobacco shall, on like manner, be purchased by contract, under such terms and conditions as upon proper enquiry, shall appear to the Managers to be most conformable to the interest concerned.

6thly, That the contractors for the salt shall agree to deliver it at certain fixed places at a stipulated Rate per 100 Maunds, comprehending such an advance upon their contracts with the Zemindars and Molungees as may be esteemed an equivalent to their Risk, Trouble and bad Debts.

7thly, That as the Advance will be made by the contractors to the Zemindars, etc., at certain periods of the season, in the usual Manner, so shall the advances from the Public Company to the contractors be made in proportion thereto.

8thly, That the salt, betelnut, and tobacco, thus purchased by the Public Company shall be transported to a certain Number of Places for sale, to be there, and there only disposed of by

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their Agents ; and that the country Merchants may then become the purchasers, and again transport the Articles wither they think they have the greatest prospect of profit ; that by this means, not only the frequent oppressions the Inhabitants of the country have suffered, by Europeans having Permission to traverse to every Place for the sale of those commodities, will be put a stop to, but, by thus reserving to the Natives and Merchants a competent share of the profits both in the purchase and sale, we may hope for the good Effect of removing the general odium that has prevailed from our seeking to deprive them of every Part of that Trade.

9thly, That as it is apprehended some difficulty will arise in securing the produce of the Dacca and Chittagong Districts, by reason of the property of the lands being scattered in a number of hands, all dependent on the Government ; it is agreed, that application shall be made to the Nabob, for Perwanahs on the several Zemindars of those districts, as well as those of Houghley, etc., strictly ordering and requiring them to contract of all the salt that can be made on their lands with the English alone, and forbidding the sale to any other Person or Persons whatsoever.

10thly, That the Honourable Company shall either share in this Trade as Proprietors, or receive an annual duty upon it, as may appear to be most for their Interest, when considered with their

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other Engagements and Demands at this Presidency.

11thly, That the Nabob shall in like Manner be considered, as may be judged most proper, either as a Proprietor, or by annual Nuzzernah, to be computed upon Inspecting a statement of his duties on salt in former years.

12thly, That the manner in which the Honourable Company and the Nabob shall be considered, being once determined, the Remainder of this Trade shall be divided amongst the Company's servants, arranged under certain classes, and each class to share a certain proportion of the capital stock.

13thly, That a Committee of Trade shall be appointed to receive the management of this Plan and present the same in all its Branches: That they shall be immediately authorised to take measures for raising the Fund at Interest, and to receive proposals, and settle the contracts: And further, that for their Assistance in this work, a person shall be appointed in the quality of their Secretary and Accomptant "[206] Mr. Sumner handed over to the Committee 106 *parwanahs*, which he had received from the Nawab through Mr. Sykes, who had then visited Murshidabad, "for authorising and facilitating this trade," especially for giving effect to the 3rd and 9th regulations. He also presented to the Committee

[206] *Proceedings of the Select Committee*, 10th August, 1765.

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several other papers, which he had collected, regarding the produce of the different districts and the conditions under which salt could be contracted.[207] About the appointment of the Committee of Trade, the Select Committee was of opinion that it should be composed of two members of their body and two gentlemen of the Council.[208] The Committee of Trade solicited in their letter to the Council in Bengal, dated 11th September, 1765, "a Deed to secure the Proprietors in the Right to the same (reserved trade in the articles of salt, betelnut, and tobacco) during the continuance of their present engagements, to be renewed every season as long as it may be agreeable to the honourable Company that this plan should subsist." The Council thought it proper to grant the said 'Deed,' which was ordered to be prepared by Mr. Wittall for the security of the then Proprietor and it also agreed to write to the Court of Directors for permission to renew the same.[209]

The Select Committee considered at a meeting held on 18th September[210] that it would be more for the interest of the Company "to be considered

207 *Ibid.*

208 *Ibid.*

209 *Bengal Consultations*, 16th September, 1765.

210 *Bengal Consultations*, 18th September, 1765.

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as superior of this Trade" rather than "to be engaged as Proprietors in the Stock" and that it should receive a duty on the following rates :—

"On salt, 35 per cent. Valuing the 100 Maunds at the rate of 90 Rupees, and in consideration hereof the present Collaree [211] Duty to be abolished.

On Betelnut, 10 per cent. on the prime cost, on Tobacco, 25 per cent. on Ditto."

It was also decided that proprietors in the stock for this trade were to be arranged into three classes. The first class was to consist of the Governor with five shares, the second (of the Council) with three shares, the General with three shares, ten gentlemen of the Council each with two shares, two Colonels each with four shares (in all 39 shares). The second class was to be composed of one Chaplain, fourteen junior servants, and three Lieutenant Colonels, in all 18 persons, each of whom was to be entitled to one-third of a Councillor's proportion or two-thirds of one share (in all twelve shares for the second class). The

[211] "Collaree properly Khalari, corruptly collary, Collerie, Collurie, Khallary, etc., Bengal. A place where salt is manufactured: a salt-bed or pan; a mound of earth hollowed at the top, in which straw and other materials are placed to serve as a filter for the salt water poured upon it and which when freed from dirt and sand becomes brine for boiling." Wilson's *Glossary*.

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third class was to be formed of thirteen Factors, four Majors, four First Surgeons at the Presidency, two First Surgeons at the Army, one Secretary to the Council, one Sub-accountant, one Persian translator, and one Sub-Export-Warehouse-keeper, in all 27 persons, each of whom was to be entitled to the sixth of a Councillor's proportion, one one-third of one share (eight shares for the third class). Twelve shares in that trade were to be allotted to 18 persons, composed of the First, Senior and Junior merchants, Lieutenant Colonels, and Chaplain or Chaplains, and eight shares to 24 persons composed of the Senior Factors, Majors, and Surgeons.

The Committee of Trade was to have power to form bye-laws and to enforce them with the approval of the Body of proprietors, and the books of the Society were to be opened on the first date of every September and closed on the 31st of the following August. The plan of the Select Committee was confirmed by the Council in Calcutta on 25th September, 1765, and it was then sent to the Committee of Trade with instructions to proceed accordingly.

The Select Committee in its letter to the Court of Directors, dated 30th September, 1765, stated that the monopoly of trade in salt, betelnut and tobacco was established in the hands of a Company, composed of three first classes of the Company's covenanted servants, the Field Officers,

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Chaplains and Head Surgeons, in order "to remove the Inconveniences of a free Trade, prevent the oppressions daily committed, save this valuable Article of Commerce from ruin, and diffuse the benefits resulting indiscriminately among all your servants entitled to Dustucks" to the above-mentioned officers. "In admitting the Field Officers, and stating the proportions allotted to each class," the members of the Select Committee "had particular regard to the present situation" of the Council and the Field Officers, who were excluded from "many Emoluments they before Enjoyed." In their opinion, gentlemen who had "risen to their stations with Credit and Reputation" were "entitled to something more than a mere subsistence. They have a right to expect such Advantages.....as may enable them to return in few years, with independence, to their own country."

Effects of this monopoly.

Thus we have noted the objects of the Select Committee in establishing the monopoly of salt trade. Let us try to know how it affected the people of the country. Monopoly of trade in a country placed exclusively in the hands of one body is generally prejudicial to the interests of its inhabitants.

View of Verelst.

Mr. Verelst, however, held that "as the price of salt was fixed at two hundred rupees per hundred maunds, and all taxes, delays, and difficulties, were removed, by collecting

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duty from the Society, the Committee was able to ascertain the price at the several markets, which would effectually secure the consumer from every imposition."[212] He points out that Mr. Sumner enquired about the prices of salt for 20 years back and the price was then fixed at the several markets "to which the Company transported salt, full fifteen per cent. lower than the price at which it usually sold. From these markets it was carried by the natives; so that the consumer must purchase his salt for less than had been ordinarily given." In support of his view he has quoted the following figures about the price of salt in Bengal before the establishment of the Society. According to him from 1760 to 1765 A.D. salt was sold in Calcutta from 100 Arcot rupees to 170 Arcot rupees per 100 maunds; at Patna the lowest price was 350 and it often rose to 500 rupees, 600 rupees and even 700 rupees. The Committee of Trade established twelve different markets throughout the country. In order to settle the prices of salt in those different markets the prices of salt for many years past (from some places for 13 years, from some places upwards of 20 years) were taken into consideration by the Committee of Trade, which took a medium of those prices, and settled the price of salt 12 to 15 per cent. lower than such medium. Mr. Verelst has also quoted figures

[212] *View of Bengal*, p. 116.

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about prices of salt from Mr. Sumner's papers and from some original papers in the possession of Mr. Rumbold as "proofs that the price of salt at Patna was nearly, if not precisely, communibus annis, the same before the Society took place, during the continuance of the Society, and after the abolition of it....."[213] He has quoted from *Thoughts on the Affairs of Bengal* by Arch. Keir, who was so great a trader in salt that he employed 13,000 people in one season for its manufacture, the following sentences in support of his statements:— "That the Society for the trade in salt, betelnut, and tobacco, instituted by Lord Clive and the Select Committee, was so far from being detrimental to the country, that those articles were not only not sold dearer, but indeed at a lower rate, during the monopoly, at most places at least, than at a medium, had been done for many years before, while there was a fixed price upon them, which no doubt, would have been of advantage to the people, had it been continued particularly with regard to salt." He admits that the price of salt increased after the establishment of the society in and about Calcutta because "formerly the duties were levied on the passage of salt to different parts of the country and now the duty was levied upon its importation into Calcutta." But in his opinion this did not affect

[213] *Ibid*, p. 114.

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the people in the interior parts of the country, and he has also noted that Mr. Bolts estimated the price of salt by taking into consideration the Calcutta prices of that article instead of forming a proper judgment by studying the condition of the people in other parts of the country.

Bolts' opinion.

Bolts gives quite a different account. According to him the establishment of the monopoly of salt trade greatly affected the interests of the people in general as the "produce of the whole country was engrossed by the Committee, who paid at the rate of 75 rupees for what was sold in many places upwards of 500 Rupees per 100 maunds; which in effect was making a poor inhabitant pay at the rate of $6\frac{1}{2}$ rupees for a quantity of salt which, in the course of the trade, he would have bought for one rupee."[214] He has quoted several documents in support of his view both in the body of his book as well as in its appendix. The Dutch traveller Stavorinus makes the following remark about the effects of the monopolies on the people of Bengal:—"These poor people (the Bengalese) who contribute so much to the prosperity of the country, instead of being favoured and encouraged by the English, are on the contrary, continually exposed to the rapacious

Remark of Stavorinus.

214 Bolts, *Considerations on Indian Affairs*, p. 177.

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extortions of their taskmasters and are oppressed in every way, partly by open violence, and partly by monopolies, which the English have made of all articles necessary to life, the dried cowdung even not exempted, which those poor people use for fuel. But this is not so much to be ascribed to the English Company as to their servants, who leave no means untried, to accumulate wealth. They do not trouble themselves about the manner of obtaining it, so they do but speedily amass the riches they are in search of."[214a]

We could have prepared a real picture of the condition of the people after the establishment of this Society, if we had been able to study the facts from some other disinterested authorities. The native writers are all silent on this point, and other records are also lacking. If Bolts' account cannot be regarded as historical because he was biassed against the Company, no absolute reliance can also be placed on the accounts of Verelst or Sumner. Both the latter had taken part in the trade and had direct interest in it. So their accounts might be coloured by personal considerations.

Absence of disinterested authorities and silence of the native writers on this point.

We have already noted how the Court of Directors in their letters to the Council in Bengal, had always expressed dissatisfaction with the conduct

214a *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, pp. 490-92.

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of their servants and *gomastas* in Bengal for carrying on an illegal trade within the country, to the great prejudice of the interests of the merchants and people of the country as well as of the Company. The Directors had hoped that the Select Committee, after its arrival in Calcutta, would be able to effect a fair settlement in the matter of internal trade.[214b] But on being informed of the Select Committee's plan through a letter from Bengal, dated 30th September, 1765, they discountenanced it wholly. They sent their sentiments and orders to Bengal in the following terms:—"We have in all our letters, from the first knowledge we had of our servants being engaged in the Inland Trade, strongly discountenanced and forbade it. We have always treated it as a Breach of our orders, a violation of the Phirmaund, and in a great Measure the cause of the late Wars: The amazing sums demanded for Restitution, in respect of Losses sustained in this Trade, have opened our Eyes to the vast extent to which it has been carried; the oppressions of the unhappy Natives, that have attended the carrying it on, and which have pervaded all Parts of the Nabob's Dominions, have convinced us, that a Monopoly of the Necessaries of Life, in any Hands whatever, more

Plan of the Select Committee discountenanced by the Court of Directors.

214b Letter to Bengal, dated 24th December, 1765.

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especially in the Hands of the English. who are possessed of such an overruling Influence, is liable to the greatest Abuses.

* * * * *

With respect to the Company, it is neither consistent with their Honour nor their Dignity to promote such exclusive Trade. As it is now more immediately our Interest and Duty to protect and cherish the Inhabitants and to give them no occasion to look on every Englishman as their national Enemy, a sentiment we think over a Monopoly would necessarily suggest; we cannot therefore approve the plan you have sent us for trading in salt, Betelnut, or Tobacco or admit of this Trade in any shape whatever; and do hereby confirm our former orders for its entire Abolition." [215] It was therefore resolved by the Select Committee on the 16th of January, 1767, "That the Society of Trade shall be abolished and the inland trade totally relinquished on the first day of September next." [216] It was not actually abolished till the 14th of September, 1768.[216a]

Its orders for entire abolition of the monopoly.

215 Letter to Select Committee, dated 17th May, 1766, paras. 31 and 36.

216 Verelst, *View of Bengal*, p. 119.

216a Mill, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 431.

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Section IV.

Saltpetre trade of the English at Patna.

The extent of Patna at that time was about seven miles in length and half a mile in breadth.[217] It was a centre of trade for cloth,[218] opium,[218a] and chiefly for saltpetre. Most of the saltpetre exported[219] by the European Companies was manufactured within the province of Bihar. The Dutch and the French, who also had their factories at Patna, were the rivals of the English in this saltpetre trade.

Bihar, the centre of saltpetre manufacture and trade.

In 1739 men of the English factory at Patna had a quarrel with the men of the Dutch factory there concerning the saltpetre "bought jointly

[217] Grose, *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. II, pp. 639-42; Rennel, *Memoir of the Map of Indostan*, p. 61.

[218] Letter to Court, dated 3rd January, 1740.

[218a] Stavorinus, *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, pp. 474-78; Abbe Raynal, *The Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies*, Vol. I, p. 319.

[219] *Fort William Consultations*, 25th September, 1752; Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.

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which was seized by the Dutch with an armed force." The dispute growing acute, the English President and Council in Calcutta applied privately to the Dutch Directorate at Hugli, and the matter was then amicably settled by June of the same year.[220] Soon after this, the members of the English factory at Patna were informed by their authorities in Calcutta "to procure a large quantity of saltpetre as soon as possible" which the former promised to do by 14th July.[221] On 29th August the Patna factory sent a fleet to Calcutta with 18603 bags of saltpetre and in October another fleet with 6500 bags more.[222]

Competition among the European Companies for the purchase of saltpetre.

But again in the year 1741 the Dutch Chief at Patna "contrary to an agreement endevoured to procure all the saltpetre he could to the (English) Company's prejudice."[223] Thereupon the Council in Calcutta wrote to the Dutch Director at Hugli, who "promised to write strenuously to Patna."

The price of saltpetre rose that year to six 'Ely (Ilahi) Rupees' a maund on account of these disputes, which were, however, soon accommodated

220 Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 478 and 518. Letter to Court, 3rd January, 1740, para. 86.

221 *Ibid*, para. 90.

222 *Ibid*, para. 98.

223 Letter to Court, dated 11th December, 1741, para. 218.

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and a contract was then signed for the ensuing year.[224] Lieutenant Jacobs went back from Patna to Calcutta on 16th January, 1742, with 4533 bags of saltpetre and 64 bales (of cloth), 1018 bags more being then on the way.[225] The Patna factory further "gave hopes of 56000 Maund saltpetre" and sent words to the authorities in Calcutta that it had "10258 Maund in Warehouse" and had "supplied Madras with 1800" and was "sending 3800 maund more."[226]

About the beginning of the next year the authorities in Calcutta received from Patna only "12212 bags saltpetre invoiced at 4 rupees a maund."[227] The advance of Balaji Rao through Bihar in the month of February, 1743[228] "impeded saltpetre investment at Patna."[229] The Company had to suffer further troubles in this respect on account of Mr. Cole's maladministration of the Patna factory and his behaviour towards Omichand, Deepchand (brother of Omichand) and other *Assamys*."[229a]

The English factors at Patna tried to persuade both the Dutch and the French to keep down the

224 Letter to Court, 30th January, 1742, para. 5.
225 *Ibid*, para. 7.
226 Letter to Court, 31st July, 1742, para. 20.
227 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 58.
228 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, para. 8.
229 *Ibid*, para. 19.
229a Letter to Court, 8th November, 1744, para. 18.

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price.[230] The Dutch Directorate at Hugli expressed its willingness to enter into agreements with the English for the purchase of saltpetre, but the French "insisted on 25000 Maunds yearly."[231] The Dutch "desired the French might have only 25 per cent., the French have no right to more."[232] But the French remained persistent in their demands, and so the authorities in Calcutta "wrote to Patna to agree with the Dutch in purchasing as last year and to bring the French to Reasonable terms and not buy any separate."[233] Mr. Drabbe, the Dutch Chief at Patna, agreed to "purchase saltpetre and to give the Three Nations their usual proportions for Dobarra Petre at 3 rupees 4 annas sicca per Maund."[234] On the 2nd of January, 1745, the Patna factory sent 6094 bags of saltpetre, together with 42 bales of cloths, and 8 bales of chints to Calcutta.[235]

But the troubles about the accounts of Omichand, Deepchand and others remained yet unsettled. So Omichand and Deepchand resolved not to allow the English to purchase a seer of saltpetre

230 Letter to Court, dated 9th February, 1745, para. 63.

231 *Ibid*, para. 64

232 *Ibid*, para. 65.

233 *Ibid*, para. 68.

234 Letter to Court, dated 11th August, 1745, para. 10.

235 Letter to Court, dated 9th February, 1745, para. 63.

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and offered at the Nawab's *darbar* 25000 rupees to compel the Europeans to buy solely of them.[236] At this the President of the Council in Calcutta wrote to the Chief of the Patna factory advising him to "act in conjunction with the Dutch" and not to "advance a Rupee to Assamys."[237] The entrance of another Maratha invading army into the province of Bihar *via* Patna, during the rainy season of 1745, created fresh troubles for the Company's trade, "whereby Patna could not get away their Bales (of cloth) or saltpetre." The Marathas plundered Futwah and burnt a godown, where 7186 maunds of saltpetre had been deposited.[238] However, Mr. Drabbe, the Dutch Chief at Patna, agreed to provide saltpetre for the year 1746 "agreeable to the last year's contract 3 Rupees 4 annas a maund but (on condition that) what Ballances should become due from the Merchants and Assamies each party to bear proportion of the Loss."[239] The English Company's authorities in Calcutta agreed to this and "directed Patna to engage by contracts or with ready money as to the other Nations and to them might seem best."[240]

On 16th March, 1746, the Chief of the Patna factory informed the authorities in Calcutta that "they had sent the saltpetre that was damaged by

236 *Ibid*, dated 31st January, 1746, paras. 47-59.
237 *Ibid*.
238 *Ibid*, paras. 111-14.
239 *Ibid*, para. 137.
240 *Ibid*.

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the Fire at Fatwah to the Carconnahs (manufactories) at Chupra and Singia, the produce of which they would send the next Season."[241] On 15th April of the same year the Dutch Chief "signed the contract for the saltpetre business," whereupon the English informed him that they would want "a large supply of Petre." He replied that he "would do his utmost to procure as large a quantity as possible, that in consequence thereof he afterwards proposed to them the buying of Deepchund's Petre at a stipulated price and he had sent people to Chupra to make the bargain but that he could not come to any agreement for it."[242] In short Mr. Drabbe then "assured them he should not be able to provide more saltpetre this year than he did the last."[243] But the English were then in need of more saltpetre, as they had received only 21274 maunds during the last year. So their authorities in Calcutta thought it proper to consult the Dutch Directorate at Hugli about purchasing Deepchand's saltpetre, and sent Mr. Kempe and Mr. Eyre to Hugli. On 7th June, Messrs. Kempe and Eyre returned to Calcutta with a letter from the Dutch Director at Hugli, desiring the English to give orders to their men at

241 Letter to Court, dated 30th November, 1746, para. 23.

242 *Ibid*, para. 25.

243 *Ibid.*

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Patna to join sincerely with Mr. Drabbe. The Dutch Director further declared that he would have then "reason to hope that they (the English) shall get Deepchand's Petre at a rate not high enough to encourage him (the Dutch Director at Hugli) to persist in crossing" the English in that trade.[244] On the same day the President in Calcutta informed the gentlemen at the Patna factory of the conference they had with the "Dutch Gentlemen at Hughley and sent them a copy of the Letter the Dutch Director and Council had wrote to Mr. Drabbe in this affair directing them to act in concert with him.....as they were well aware how it would be necessary to get a large quantity of Petre for the expected shipping."[245]

Mr. Drabbe made another proposal to the English at the Patna factory "concerning the purchase of Deepchund's Petre at the price formerly agreed on provided they (the English) would pay an Import Duty."[246] The English told him that "they should be glad of the purchase (but) that whatever was paid no mention should be made of the customs." He agreed to this and expressed that he would write to Chuprah accordingly ; but on 7th July "he wrote to Mr. Barwell for a Note

244 *Ibid*, para. 26.
245 *Ibid*, para. 26.
246 *Ibid*, para. 28.

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for 25,000 Sicca Rupees to carry on the Petre business" for that year's contract. Mr. Barwell, "being out of cash and none of the shroffs caring to lend any money at Interest," offered him a Bill of Exchange on the Council in Calcutta. But that was rejected.[247] Being informed of this by a letter from the Patna factory, dated 11th July, the President and the Council in Calcutta procured a Bill of Exchange for 50,000 rupees from Jagat Seth's house and sent it to Patna, as their necessity (for saltpetre) was very pressing.[248] On 14th September, 1746, the President and Council in Calcutta received one letter from the Patna factory, dated 28th August, acknowledging the receipt of their Bill for 50,000 Sicca Rupees, and another letter, dated the 31st August, "advising of their having sent 30000 Sicca Rupees to the Dutch Chief," who returned a receipt for the sum.[249]

The Dutch boats arrived at Hugli towards the end of September with 36,000 maunds of saltpetre from Patna[250] but the English factory could not

[247] *Ibid*, para. 29.

[248] *Ibid*.

[249] *Ibid*, para. 35.

The form of the receipt was:—"That he acknowledged to have received of Mr. Barwell 30,000 Sicca Rupees of which Rs. 26,175 in Account of the Petre business and Rs. 3825 Account of Chupra Petre which by Mr. Barwell's order he had paid the Durbar."

[250] *Ibid*, para. 35.

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send to Calcutta the 27,000 maunds, which only it had been able to collect, for want of boats.[251] The English factory again fell into troubles with the Dutch Chief for the latter's demanding all the money, as arranged in the contract, for the purchase of Deepchand's saltpetre. The English at the Patna factory wrote to the Dutch Chief there that as they were short of money, they would send him "what they had in the House being 5,000 Sicca Rupees and would give him Bill" on their authorities in Calcutta for what more he might want.[252] But the Dutch Chief replied that "it was not in his power to accept of Bills of Exchange but of ready money wherefore their tendering of Bills has been effectless so that if they want their true proportion of this year's petre He friendly desires them once more to send them the money wanting for that purpose, for on the contrary he shall be compelled to send their remaining proportion down to Bengal."[253] Thus the English saw that they would "receive no more petre from the Dutch Chief than to the amount of the money" they had handed over to him. The President and the Council in Calcutta, therefore, applied to the Dutch Directorate and Council at Hugli to have their "true proportion of Petre

251 *Ibid*, para. 38.
252 *Ibid*, para. 36.
253 *Ibid*.

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from Mr. Drabbe agreeable to contract to be delivered by him to them in Patna or in case of its having been brought to Hugly that it should be delivered" to them from that place. The Dutch at Hugli agreed to give the English their true proportion at Hugli provided the English kept "to the Letter of the contract in regard to Deepchand's last year's Petre" and also agreed to "partake in all charges of bringing it down and in the risque proportionable to the quantity."[254] The English agreed to this on the condition that the Dutch at Hugli "agreed with Mr. Drabbe in making the price for Deepchund's Petre."[255]

Troubles of the Company due to local Indian merchants.

But a new difficulty soon arose. The Dutch at Hugli were informed by their men at Patna, "that Deepchund by giving 10,000 Rupees to the (Nawab's) Government had got leave to send his last year's Petre down to Bengal and that he is making preparations for it." Considering this to be a matter of great importance, as it might highly prejudice their salt-petre trade at Patna, which was "one of the principal reasons of the establishment" of all the European Factories there, the Dutch at Hugli deputed Messrs. Bisdom and Walbeck, two gentlemen of their Council, to the English Council in Calcutta, to deliberate with them "what might and ought to be applied to

254 *Ibid*, para. 39.

255 *Ibid*.

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frustrate that pernicious design and that since the Naib Subah of Behar is gone to Muxadavad (Murshidabad) they cannot find any better means than to get the Vacqueels (vakils) of the three nations (that is the French as well) as soon as possible to complain in significant terms to him and the Nawab of the injustice of these proceedings and the prejudice that is thereby done.'' [256] But the English expressed their unwillingness to enter into such measures with the Dutch, as they had not heard anything from their own men at Patna. Besides this, they had received an order from their authorities in England for withdrawing the factory at Patna, and purchasing saltpetre either in Calcutta or at Hugli.[257] Again, the Dutch wrote to the English on 31st October that "in case Mr. Drabbe should succeed at Patna in the purchase of Deepchund's last year's Petre, without (the English) agreeing to price,'' they would not fail to give the English time for "final declaration'' and would also give them their true proportion of it, if the English, on their side, fulfilled "the condition upon which that promise was made.[258] But the English did not send any reply, whereupon the Dutch ordered that neither the English nor any under their jurisdic-

Co-operation between the Dutch and the English Company disappeared.

256 *Ibid*, para. 40.
257 *Ibid*, paras. 41 and 42.
258 *Ibid*, para. 43.

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tion "should purchase any of Deepchund's Petre."[259]

The abovementioned troubles and the orders of the authorities in England for the withdrawal of the Patna factory and for the purchase of saltpetre wherever it could be available had by this time made the English Company indifferent to the saltpetre business at Patna, and so the Company remained silent.[260] Thus, when Mr. Drabbe visited the English factory at Patna, early in November, to "know if they would continue the Petre business for the ensuing year on the terms of the last year's contract," the Chief of that factory referred the matter to the authorities in Calcutta, who advised him in reply not to "engage with the Dutch Chief for that Article."[261]

Further negotiations between the Dutch and the English.

On the 14th of June, 1748, the Dutch at Hugli informed the English that their men at Patna had contracted with Deepchand for all the saltpetre he would gather till October at Rs. 4-8-0 per maund, and so requested them to supply them with 60,000 rupees for that business.[262] The English replied on 1st August next that if the

259 *Ibid.*

260 *Ibid.*

261 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 75.

262 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 63.

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Dutch "would deliver their petre at Hughly at 4-8 per maund" then they would take it and pay them what money "should be thought necessary to be advanced thereon."[263] On 14th August, the Dutch replied that as the proposal of the English was so extraordinary, they would keep the saltpetre for themselves. The English then informed the Dutch at Hugli that as their own members had left the Patna factory they (the Dutch) would bring down for them at Hugli their proportion of saltpetre. On 19th September the Dutch at Hugli informed the English that 27,449 bags of saltpetre had arrived and that 1,800 bags had been lost on account of a boat catching fire.[264] The English then sent Mr. Richard Court to receive their own proportion and the latter returned with 8,199 bags.[265] About this time the English sent home on "board the Winchelsea Thirteen hundred 1,300 bags of salt-petre, on the Port Bello Eight hundred bags 800 and on the True Briton Twelve hundred bags....."[266]

On 23rd April, 1753, the President of the Council in Calcutta informed other members that, being encouraged by Khawja Wajid's *gomasta*, he had applied to his master (Khawja Wajid) for the

263 *Ibid*, para. 64.
264 *Ibid*, para. 66.
265 *Ibid*.
266 Letter to Court, 22nd December, 1748, para. 4.

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provision of saltpetre, as he had considered that it would be better for the Company's interest "to procure this article from the original purchaser at Patna"[267] than to have it from the Dutch and others. Khawja Wajid's *gomasta* was, therefore, summoned to appear before the Council, but as he had by that time returned to Hugli, one Harakchand of Calcutta, appeared on his behalf on 30th April and said that be had received a reply from Khawja Wajid "with orders to agree to for the delivery of 51,000 maunds (of saltpetre) at Calcutta between the months of September and January at the rate of Arcot Rs. 5-14 per Factory maund. That Khawja Wajid wanted no money to be advanced before the delivery of the petre (but) only interest for the amount from the day of making the contract, and that he (Harakchand) would sign the Teep for it on the usual terms with the penalty in case of failing in the contract."[268] Omichand was then called before the Council, and was informed that he should lower the price of saltpetre if he wanted to continue the contract in his name. Omichand replied that he would "provide the petre at A. Rs. 5-13 per Factory maund though by that means he should be sufferer."[269] The President placed his own opinion before the

267 Fort William Consultations, 23rd April, 1753.

268 Fort William Consultations, 30th April, 1753.

269 *Ibid.*

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Council on 3rd May, 1753, after forwarding various arguments against contracting with Omichand.[270] But the majority decided to enter into a contract with Omichand rather than with Khawja Wajid, as they suspected that a contract with Khawja Wajid would serve to increase his power and influence, to the great prejudice of the Company's interests at Patna. Accordingly a contract was made with Omichand on the following terms :—

Contract of the English with Omichand for saltpetre.

"I, Omichand, merchant of Calcutta, do hereby agree with the President and Council on account of the Hon'ble East India Company, to deliver them in Calcutta the full quantity of 51,000 Factory maunds of Patna Dobarra saltpetre at A. Rs. 5-12 per Factory Maund upon the following terms. To have nine percent interest allowed me upon the whole amount, A. Rs 2,93,250 from the 17th May, 1753, and for what sums advanced me from the Company's treasury, I shall give receipts. In the month of September I will deliver into the Company's godown maunds 20,000 and the remaining 31,000 by the 1st February, 1754, and if the whole quantity be not delivered into the Godowns by that time, I agree to pay the penalty of 10 p.c." [271]

270 Fort William Consultations, 3rd May, 1753.

271 Fort William Consultations, 24th May, 1753.

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Satisfaction of the Court of Directors at this contract.

In their letter, dated 31st January, 1755, the Court of Directors expressed their satisfaction at the conduct of the members of the Council in Calcutta for their taking great pains in making the saltpetre contract for the year 1753, but they noted that they would have been more pleased if the contract for saltpetre had been made "with Khawja Wajid whose property it was," for in their opinion it was for the interest of the Company "to encourage as many persons as possible to make proposals not only for this article of saltpetre but all others." The Court of Directors further instructed the Council to "stir up and promote a useful competition for contracts" and to lay in a large stock of saltpetre [272] as they wanted as large quantity of that article as possible for the year 1756.[273]

Pressing demands for saltpetre from England, Bombay and Madras.

Besides the pressing demand for saltpetre from England, the Bombay and the Madras Councils also wrote to the Council in Calcutta in January 1757 for despatching saltpetre to their respective places; the former for 500 tons and the latter for as large a quantity of that article as could be procured. But the Madras Council sent only 88,000 rupees for purchasing that article and also for that year's expenses of the Company's

272 Court's Letter, 31st January, 1755.

273 Court's Letter, 19th December, 1756.

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servants in Calcutta. The Council in Calcutta was highly dissatisfied at this behaviour of their men at Madras and complained to the Court of Directors in strong terms. But they tried their best to procure as much they could during these troubled days.[274] Before the middle of February next, the President could with great difficulty procure only 800 bags of saltpetre at Chinsura.[275] After capturing Chandernagore, the English applied to the Dutch Directorate at Hugli to make a contract with them for 60,000 maunds of saltpetre but they received no definite answer. At this they agreed to take it from Omichand at 6 Arcot rupees per factory maund, "20,000 mds. to be delivered in September, 15,000 in November and the remainder in February."[276] Mr. Pearkes was also likely to make a contract at Patna for 40,000 mds. at "C Rs. 5-6 as. per factory maund to be delivered in Calcutta free of all Risque (risk) and charges."[277] About the middle of August the Council in Calcutta sent to Madras 800 bags of saltpetre on the Mermaid Sloop.[278]

274 Letter to Court, 31st January, 1757.
Letter from the Council in Calcutta to the Secret Committee, 8th January, 1757; Hill, *op. cit*, Vol. II, p. 92.

275 Letter to Court, 23rd February, 1757.

276 Letter to Court, 20th August, 1757.

277 *Ibid.*

278 Letter to Court, 27th September, 1757.

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The English were all this while trying to gain absolute control over the saltpetre farm in Bihar. After the installation of Mir Jafar as the Nawab of Bengal, disputes arose between the servants of Khawja Wajid and those of the English Company's factory at Patna (already re-established), culminating in the death of two servants of that factory. This accident gave Clive the plea to request the Nawab for granting the saltpetre farm to the English Company as the only means of preventing such disputes in future. He offered the highest terms at which the farm had ever been rated. After much hesitation the Nawab agreed to the proposal "reserving the receipt of 20,000 maunds or 1,600,000 pounds weight a year for his own use." The Dutch protested against this grant, whereupon Clive produced a letter showing that they had tried to have the farm for themselves from Sirajuddowla also. However, the English "agreed to supply them (the Dutch) with the quantity they wished to purchase."[279] We find in the Select Committee's Proceedings, 18th September, 1758, that the Dutch tried to create some troubles for the English farm with the help of the Raja of Betiah, whom they had satisfied by offering various presents. But the English triumphed at

Clive secured absolute control of E. I. Co. over saltpetre farm in Bihar from Mir Jafar ;

Opposition of the Dutch failed to check English triumph in saltpetre market.

[279] Orme, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 282.

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last and by the year 1759 they commanded the saltpetre market. Even then, in the year 1770, six ships of the Dutch, three bound for Batavia and three for Holland, exported full two millions and a half pounds of saltpetre.[280]

[280] Stavorinus, *op. cit.* Vol. I, pp. 478-79.

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CHAPTER IV.

General Economic Condition.

Section I: *Communications (Land and Water).*

The state of communications within a country greatly influences its economic condition. The whole province of Bengal was then covered with a network or roads. Not to speak of places like Calcutta, Patna, Murshidabad, and Dacca (which were connected by roads with Bhutan [1] and Nepal [2] in the north, Ganjam [3] in the south, Singbhum,[4] Palamau [5] and Chotanagpur [6] in the south-west, Benares and Gazipur [7] in the west, Betiah [8] in the north-west, Silhet,[9] Jaintia and Khaspur in the north east, and Islamabad (*i.e.*, Chittagong),[10] Rajeghat, and

Network of roads throughout the province,—

1 Rennel, *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar*, pp. 11-13.
2 *Ibid*, pp. 16-17, 26.
3 *Ibid*, pp. 29-41.
4 *Ibid*, pp. 70-71.
5 *Ibid*, pp. 52-53.
6 *Ibid*, p. 40.
7 *Vide* the para. on '*Post-roads.*'
8 Rennel, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.
9 *Ibid*, p. 69.
10 *Ibid*, pp. 37-38.

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Julkuddar in the south-east),—even places like Burdwan or Nagore, which were not then regarded so important as the four cities [11] mentioned above, had important roads running from and to the different parts of the country. For example, from Burdwan there were two roads running to Chandernagore and thence to Calcutta, one to Ghyretty cantonments by Dhaniakhali, one to Tamluk, one to Buz-buz, one to Nadia, one to Jalanghi, one to Rajmahal, one to Sainpahary (Tinpahar, E.I.R. Loop), one to Lacaracondah,[12] one to Radhanagore, one to Chandracona, and one to Furruckabad (a few miles above Sooty, the junction of the Ganges and the Bhagirathi). Similarly, Cassimbazar was connected by the following roads with different parts of the country. There was one from Cassimbazar to Patna,[13] one to Burdwan,[14] one to Jalanghi [15] and thence to

[11] Compare the map in Rennel's *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar.*

[12] A place of note in Rennel's time,—at present a village in the district of Birbhum, a few miles from the Panchra E.I.R. Station.

[13] Rennel, *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar*, pp. 55-56.

[14] Rennel's *Journals*, p. 98.

[15] *Ibid.* There was a second road from Cassimbazar to Jalanghi and this passed through Gunee, Raipur, Bhagirathpur, Muhammadpur, Jalanghi.

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Dacca, one to Rampur Boalia, [16] one to Meenkhot and Dinajpur ; [17] one to Ballitunghee,[18] one to Birbhum, one to Maldah, one to Rungpur and thence to Rangamati and Gwalpara passing through Bowanyganj, etc; [19] one to Birkity; [20] one to Jummucandy (Kandi in the Murshidabad District) and thence to Surrool (Surul near Bolpur) in the Birbhum district.[21] Such instances may be easily multiplied.

Single district was intersected by many roads;

Not only did the roads run from one important centre of a part of Bengal to other important centres in different parts but also a single district was intersected by many roads, running from one part of it to another. As for example, there

16 There was also a second road from Cassimbazar to Boalia, which passed through Bally, Titalya and Murcha.

17 Rennel, *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar*, p. 26; Rennel's *Journals*, p. 99.

18 Bellitunghee, a town on the Jalangi River, S.E. of Murshidabad, represented in the Atlas of India by two small villages, Ballee and Toongee.

19 "Bowyanygunge—would appear to be Bhabaniganj in Begmara Thana of the Rajshahi District map. Shown in Rennel's map as an important place from which a road leads to Murshidabad."—*Bengal: Past and present*, 1924, Vol. XXVIII, p. 192.

20 At the foot of the Rajmahal Hills; a place of note in Rennel's time.—at present a mere village in the Pakur Sub-division, a few miles from the Murarai E.I.Ry. Station and near Mahespur. Rennel's *Journals*, pp. 98-100.

21 *Ibid*, p. 104.

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were the following cross-roads in Birbhum :—(*a*) from Nagore to Deoghur,[22] (*b*) from Nagore to Comerabad (Koomrabad on the R. Mor), (*c*) from Nagore to Maluti,[23] (*d*) from Nagore to Margong (Maragrama),[24] (*e*) three roads from Nagore to Suri—(1) north road, passing through Bolio ghat, Battua, Suri—(2) middle road, through Dulebpur, Coddya, Suri,—(3) south road, through Buccesore (Bakkeswar),[25] Serampurghat, Suri, (*f*) from Nagore to Kistnagur and Elambazar, (*g*) from Nagore to Supur,[26] (*h*) from Nagore to Lacaracoddah and Ukhara, (*i*) from Nagore to Pachet,[27] (*j*) from Suri to Boudgram, (*k*) from Suri to Gomhi, (*l*) from Suri to Bahary (near Surul), (*m*) from Suri to Surul and Supur, (*n*) from Suri to Curnagore (Karnagada),[28] (*o*) from Lackanpur (a small village on the Ajay River) to Jallyne, (*p*) from Fatepur to Dyoucha, (*q*) from Purchandpur to Jummucandy (Kandi), (*r*) from Margong (Margram) to Noagong (Noagrama). The road

[22] Rennel's *Journals; Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar.* Deoghur now included within the Santal Parganas.

[23] At present a village in the Dumka Sub-division.

[24] A village in the Rampurhat Subdivision of the Birbhum District.

[25] Famous for hot-wells.

[26] Near Raipur, birthplace of the late Lord S. P. Sinha.

[27] Modern Raniganj and the surrounding places.

[28] Another road through Parbatipur, Manguldy, Billetty, Rupur.

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from Nagore to Jangipur [29] lay through Bolioghat, Carracoondy, Puranagrama, Purchandpura, Bilaspur, Margong (Maragrama), Ningha, Badhur, Sonkoe, Mirzapur, Jangipur.[30]

The most interior parts of the country were also connected by roads with the distant capital cities; these roads were constantly in use, and have been carefully noted by Rennel. For example, roads from Calcutta run to places like Patchwary [31] and Puccorcc Cutchery (modern Pakur).

Interior of Eastern Bengal was not provided with so many good roads as Western Bengal.

The interior of the Eastern part of Bengal, especially the tract lying east of Dacca, was not provided with so many good roads as the Western part [32] owing chiefly to the presence of numerous rivers and creeks.

But important places in that part were connected by roads with cities of note in almost every direction.

The important places in that part were, however, connected by roads with cities of note in almost every direction. As for example, there were two roads from Calcutta

29 A Sub-division in the Murshidabad District.

30 *Rennel's Journals*, pp. 104-105.

31 A tract of Santal Parganas lying to the North-west of Mahespur.

32 "After leaving Barraset, we seldom found the roads good, they being excessive narrow, rough and crooked and very frequently running across paddy fields so that when the ground is ploughed there are no traces of road to be found."—Rennel's *Journals*, p. 87.

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to Dacca ;[33] two roads from Calcutta to Bakarganj, the first road running through Jessore-Khulna and the second by Hobibgunge ;[34] two roads from Calcutta to Islamabad (Chittagong), the second passing through Dacca ;[35] one road from Calcutta to Silhet *via* Dacca.[36] In the tract lying east of the Meghna river the condition of the roads was excessively bad. The roads between Luckipur and Chandergunge (which was 15 miles distant from the former) were almost everywhere broken, and those between Chandergunge and Colinda (about 15 miles distant from Chandergunge) were in general very bad, the country being excessively low.[37] From Colinda towards the Feny River the roads were worse.[38] The roads between the Feny River and Islamabad (Chittagong) were intersected by many *nullahs*, and as most of these were without bridges, the roads were almost impassable during the rainy season. The whole road was skirted by a range of

Condition of roads bad to the east of the Meghna river.

[33] Rennel, *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar*, pp. 23-24.

[34] *Ibid*, p. 5.

[35] *Ibid*, pp 37-38.

[36] *Ibid*, p. 69.

[37] Rennel's *Journals*, p. 75.

[38] "From Assaropgunge or Meerjapur (five miles from Cossidya) to the banks of the Fenny is near three miles, the roads in general excessive bad."—*Ibid*, p. 76.

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small hills to the eastward which sometimes came within half a mile of the road.[39]

'Post-roads' of the time.

From Rennel we can also get an idea of the "post-roads" of the time.[40] These were six in number running towards different directions from Calcutta :— (1) From Calcutta to Buxar (through Chandernagore, Hugli, Culna, Plassey, Berhampur, Cassimbazar, Murshidabad, Garreah, Sooty, Udayanalla, Rajmahal, Terriagully, Bhagalpur, Mongyr, Balgauda, Bar, Patna, Dinapore, Arrah, Buxar) ; (2) from Calcutta to Dinajpur, *via* Murshidabad (through Bhogwangola, crossing the Ganges at Godagarry, Nabobganj, Nishapur, Buxiganj, Dinajpur) ; (3) from Calcutta to Dacca (through Mullickpur, Moorley (Jessore), Mahmudpur, Hajiganj, Dacca) ; (4) from Calcutta to Burdwan ; (5) from Calcutta to Balasore *via* Midnapur, Narangur, Jelasore, Balasore ; (6) from Calcutta to Kulpi.

Condition of roads through the Chotanagpur hills.

Up till the middle of the 18th century there were no good roads from Calcutta towards the up-country, *through the western part of the Subah* (*i.e.*, through the Chotanagpur hills), used by

39 *Ibid*, p. 76.

40 *Vide* the map in Rennel's *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar*. Post roads were roads on which there were posts or rest houses at regular intervals for changing the horses of carriages on which travellers travelled rapidly, and which carried also the '*dāk*.'

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ordinary traffic, although military troops had during the 16th and 17th centuries passed through that portion. This was because the limits of efficient Mughal administration were reached with the present districts of Birbhum and Santal Parganas, and, beyond them to the West, the rest of the country was in the hands of various semi-independent native chieftains. In the early days of the East India Company this upland country was referred to by various names indicative of certain portions of the whole country, such as '*Ramgur*,' '*Nagpore*,' '*Shereghauty*,' '*Bellagaut*,' '*Jarakond*,' etc., and up till the middle of the 18th century the country between Sherghati and Pachet (= Western Regions, *i.e.*, Raniganj and adjacent tracts) was a blank on the map.[41] But the importance of "ascertaining the most practicable way through the hills" was being gradually recognised.[42] In December 1763,

[41] *Bengal: Past and Present*, Vol. XXVIII, 1924, pp. 21-36. '*The Grand Trunk Road—its Localities*,' published in *Calcutta Review*, No. XLI, Vol. XXI, pp. 170-224.

[42] In this period, the East India Company's trade through the Gangetic valley of Bihar and the hills of Santal Parganas was exposed to unfriendly attitudes (of Mir Kasim and the Marathas); on the other hand a route through Chotanagpur to Benares region would pass the states of Hindu chieftains who might welcome a new outlet for their trade and who might serve the interest of the E. I. C. as the Hindu Zamindars and traders of Bengal had just done.

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Lieutenant Nicholl (who ten months later showed his gallantry at the battle of Buxar) "was sent to survey the line of road between the Karamnasa river and Calcutta and he executed the task to the great satisfaction of his commanding officers, and the manifest advantage of the Military service."[43] In November-December 1763 a considerable body of British troops, in Major Adam's campaign against Mir Kasim, marched across the Chotanagpur plateau.[44] In 1766 Dugloss (of the Engineers) was deputed to South Bihar to examine the passes through the hills.[45] The road from Patna to Gaya passed *via* Futwah, through Parsura, Hilsa, Islampur, Bunadiganj, Manpur, Muradganj and it is important to note that in a journey

[43] Caraccioli, *Life of Clive*, Vol. I, p. 238. This military advantage consisted in the survey and establishment of an alternative, a more direct, shorter and easier (owing to absence of big rivers) route to the frontiers of Bihar and the Benares region,—which enabled the E.I.C. to be prepared for any Afghan or Maratha invasion in future. In this matter the E.I.C. was doing what Sher Shah had done in the 16th century.

[44] *Bengal: Past and Present*, 1924, pp. 21-36.

[45] For further details, *vide ibid*, pp. 21-35. Rennel in his *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar* mentions one road from Calcutta to Junohpass in Chotanagpur (p. 40), one from Calcutta to Koondah (p. 41), one from Calcutta to Palamu (p. 53), two from Calcutta to Pachet (p. 52) and four roads from Calcutta to Singbhum (pp. 70-71).

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from Patna to Gaya the travellers had to pay tolls in twenty-four places.[46]

Communications through rivers, creeks, etc.—the Ganges and the Bramhaputra;

The Ganges and the Brahmaputra with their numerous tributaries were the chief waterways throughout the country. Rennel writes :—" The Ganges and Burramooter Rivers, together with their numerous branches and adjuncts, intersect the country of Bengal (which independent of Behar and Orissa is somewhat larger than Great Britain) in such a variety of directions, as to form the most complete and easy inland navigation that can be conceived. So equally and admirably diffused are those natural canals, over a country that approaches nearly to a perfect plane, that, after excepting the lands contiguous to Burdwan, Birboom, etc., which may be reckoned a sixth part of Bengal, we may safely pronounce, that every other part of the country, has, even in the dry season, some navigable stream within 25 miles at farthest, and more commonly within a

Rennel's remark ;

[46] Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, pp. 73-74. Kṛṣṇacandra Ghoṣāla who went on a pilgrimage in about 1767 A.D., had to pay tolls at Muradganj (for all the members of his party) amounting to Rs. 8 or Rs. 9 ; at Manpur the members of the party had to pay 12 pice (3 annas) each. At that time all this toll money went to the pocket of one Mādhavarāma, who had perhaps taken the road in lease for that term.

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third part of that distance. It is supposed, that this inland navigation gives constant employment to 30,000 boatmen. Nor will it be wondered at, when it is known, that all the salt, and a large proportion of the food consumed by ten millions of people are conveyed by water within the Kingdom of Bengal and its dependencies. To these must be added, the transport of the commercial exports and imports, probably to the amount of two millions sterling per annum ; the interchange of manufactures and products throughout the whole country ; the fisheries, and the articles of travelling."[47] There were two chief water-passages from Calcutta upwards.—(1) one *via* the Jalanghi River passing through[48] Ghyretty, Chinsurah, Hugli, Kumarhatta, Kanchrapara, Somda, Niaserai, Patvagrama, Guptipara, Gokulganja, Harinadi,[49]

Two chief waterways from Calcutta upwards ;

[47] *Memoir of the Map of Indostan*, p. 245.

[48] Between Hugli and Calcutta there were the following ferry ghats :—(*a*) Cāndapālaghāṭ near the High Court, (*b*) Vanamālī Sarakārera Ghāṭ (Vanamālī Sarakara was a very influential man and was the Kotwal of Calcutta at that time. He had then the biggest building in Calcutta. We can compare the following :—Govindarāma Mitrera chaḍī, Vanamālī Sarakārera bāḍī, Omicāndera dāḍī, Huzurimalera kaḍi=Govindarāma Mitra's stick, Vanamālī Sarkāra's house, Omicānd's beard, Huzurimal's wealth) ; (*c*) Bāgbāzār Ghāṭ, (*d*) Mālīr Ghāt.—Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, pp. 18-21.

[49] This village was situated two miles from Santipur in

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Chogdah, Pubeah Haut, Culna, Nadia, Krishnanagar, Rookpur Creek, Taegaree, Putimari[50] Natyputah, Jhinukghata, Ballitunghee,[51] Kassibarya, Buxipur, Peapur, Boyrub Creek, Head Jalanghi, Head Surda Reach, Cutlamary, Bogwangola, Meankot, Head Cossi River ;[52] the other *via* the Bhagirathi River ;[52a] up to Nadia as before and then through Mertala, Kasthasali, Beldanga, Sikiragachi, Gotpara, Ghoraiksetra, Kasipur,[53] Agradvip, Dñāihaṭ,[54] Matiarī,[55] Barbazar, Katwah,

the Nadia District. Greater part of it has been swallowed by the Ganges, the only remains being the village Bhāṭśālā which also has been removed 1 mile from Ganges. *Tīrthamaṅgala*, p. 27, footnote.

[50] Ferry Ghaṭs between Nadia and Putimari :—(*a*) Gowāḍir Ghāt (near Krishnanagar).

(*b*) Hṅādar Ghāṭ (Hṅādā, a village to the north of Krishnanagar).— *Tīrthamaṅgala*, pp. 30-31.

[51] 'Tungībālī' in Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, p. 34.

[52] Rennel's *Journals*, pp. 118-20.

[52a] *Ibid.*

[53] Ghoraiksetra is three miles to the north, and Kāśīpur two miles to the south-east of Agradvīp.

[54] A famous place in the Indrāṇī pargana of the Burdwan District.

[55] A big village situated just opposite to Dñāihāṭ, famous for the images of Rāma and Sītā. Raghunandan Mitra, the Dewan of Mahārājā Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadia, founded here twelve Śiva images.—*Tīrthamaṅgala*, p. 194, footnote.

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Plassey, Mahata,[56] Syamnagar,[57] Chumrigacha,[58] Khidirpur,[59] Saydabad, Kassimbazar, Dahapara, Sũāikulī, Murshidabad, Jiaganj, Saddekbari,[60] Bellyah, Laksipur, (modern Laksichar), Jungipur, Durgapur (modern Fateullapur),[61] Sahebghata, Sooty.[62] From Sooty the route lay through the Ganges proper, passing by the following places :— Farakkabad, Khajuria,[63] Kasyaban, Udayanala, Rajmahal, Sakrigaly, Terrigully, Pirpainti, Sahabaj, Patharghatta, Colong, Bhagalpur, Sultanganj, Jahangera, Mongyr, Surajgara, Darriarpur, Punarak, Barh,[64] Bykuntpur, Futwah,

[56] A big village in pargana Fatesing of the Murshidabad District, situated 5 miles to the south of Syamnagur.

[57] Situated 2 miles to the south of Satui.

[58] Now known as Chowrigacha situated about 8 miles to the South of Gorabazar in the Murshidabad District.

[59] Five miles to the south of Gorabazar.

[60] Vijayarama's 'Sādakbāg'; it is now in the bed of the Bhagirathi. Perhaps this place was named after Sadak Alī Khan (Miran, son of Mir Jaiar).

[61] Now known as Fatepur, situated two miles to the south of Sooty.

[62] Rennel's *Journals*, pp. 118-20; Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, pp. 18 -201.

[63] At present there is a ferryghat at Khajuria. This place falls within the Nayansuk Mahal of the Pakur Raj (S.P.).

[64] Vijayarāma refers to the heavy exaction of tolls in the 'chowki' at Barh, which led to a serious altercation between the men of his party and the sepoys stationed there.—*Tīrthamaṅgala*, pp. 58-60.

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Patna.[65] In the water-passage from Calcutta to Dacca, one had to go first to the Head Jalanghi (or Padma) river (as before); then down the Ganges to Pubna, and through the Ichhamati river to Jaffarganj and along Dhaleswari to Dacca.[66] From Dacca to Gwalpara the water-route lay up the Lakhmia (Luckya) river and along the old Brahmaputra.[67] The route from Dacca to Silhet was through the Buriganga, Little Meghna, and Surma rivers.[68]

From Calcutta to Dacca.

From Dacca to Gwalpara; from Dacca to Silhet.

The large number of tributary rivers, *nulluhs* and creeks, running almost through every part of the province, especially East Bengal, afforded excellent means of communications through which even the interior villages were always within the easy reach of travellers or merchants. Rennel observed:—"The Kingdom

Facility of communications through rivers, nulluhs, creeks, etc.

[65] Rennel's *Journals*, pp. 118-20; Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, pp. 36-37.

[66] Rennel's *Journals*, pp. 118-20.

[67] *Ibid.* "The Luckya River is the west-most Branch of the Baramputy and falls into the Issamutey a few miles below Dacca after sending out a navigable Creek which leads to Dacca and thereby allows a much shorter passage from that city to Chilmary and Gwalpura than any of the branches of the Meghna."—*Ibid*, p. 46.

[68] *Ibid.*

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of Bengal, particularly the Eastern Front is naturally the most convenient for trade within itself of any country in the world ; for the rivers divide into just a number of Branches that the people have the convenience of water carriage to and from every principal places."[69] Stavorinus also made a similar remark :—"The country is everywhere intersected, with large and broad channels, which all run into the Ganges. All merchandise is conveyed, by means of these passages, with great facility, from one place to other, throughout the land, and the chief branches of the river communicate hereby with each other.....They are agreeably bordered on either side, with many towns and villages, and with pleasant fields, of arable and pasture-land ; which renders the face of the country very beautyful. Among these channels, there are some, which are wide and deep enough, to be navigable for large ships." [70] The numerous canals in the Sunderbans were "so disposed as to form a complete navigation throughout and across the lower part of the Delta without either the delay of going

Remark of Rennel.

Remark of Stavorinus.

The canals in the Sunderbans.

[69] *An unpublished Letter of Major James Rennel*, dated Bengal, August 31st, 1765, printed in *Bengal: Past and Present*, July-September, 1933.

[70] *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 399.

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round the head of it, or the hazard of putting to the sea.''[71] The Budarashon creek was navigable throughout the year for large boats and was a "good track for boats bound from Sunderbund to Jelenghee."[72] Another small creek running out towards Rajanagore[73] and thence to Luricule,[74] and then the Meghna afforded a good passage for large boats from one river to another, but the creek which ran out four miles farther down, supplied a shorter passage. In the dry season neither of these were navigable for large boats at low water but "the delay occasioned by that" was "of trifling consequence when compared with the danger and risk of navigating Meghna, for unless this creek existed, the boats for Sunderbund to Dacca, Assam, etc., must have gone up that

[71] Rennel, *Memoir of the Map of Indostan*, p. 259.

[72] Rennel's *Journals*, p. 31. In course of his journey from Calcutta to Jalanghi, Rennel saw salt-boats (boats carrying salt from the seaboard to Patna and other towns on the Ganges) sunk near Gowgatty and Bickrygunge. *Ibid*, p. 12.

[73] Built by Raja Rajballabh, who flourished in the second quarter of the 18th century. *Ibid*, Appendix 'A,' p. 135.

[74] "Lurricule, once a remarkable village lies almost halfway betwixt the Ganges and Meghna, is about 28 miles S ½ W from Dacca, 3 ESE from Rajanagore. Here are the ruins of a Portuguese Church and of many brick houses." Rennel's *Journals*, p. 39.

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river."[75] The Kobbatuck or Kobaduck river (an offshoot of the Mathabhanga), which formed the boundary between the districts of Nadia, the 24-Peraganas and Jessore and was said to be a branch either of the Comer or of the Icchamati river, was navigable up to Sunderbans for large boats.[76] The Burashee river, another branch of the Comer (passing through the present Jessore district), was also navigable throughout the year for very large boats.[77] The common route from Kusthia to Jaynagore and Hobbygunge lay through the Lethydoman (or eastmost branch of the Kusthia creek).[78] The shortest passage from Hajiganj to Dacca and Luckipur was provided by the Nawabganj creek, which by joining the Ichhamati and the Dhaleswari rivers about Feringybazar sent out several branches, and was navigable throughout the year.[79] The Ichhamati river was navigable all the year for large boats. A small creek running out of the Dhaleswari river at Sapur up to the Ichhamati river was navigable throughout the

[75] *Ibid.* These creeks were almost due west of Chandpur. Their position is now mainly occupied by the united waters of the Ganges and the Meghna.

[76] *Ibid*, p. 89.

[77] *Ibid*, p. 91.

[78] This route was of use only "when the rivers have rose enough to make it navigable which commonly happens about the latter end of May." Rennel's *Journals*, p. 22.

[79] *Ibid*, p. 28.

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year for boats of a moderate size. The Karnaphuli river afforded a water passage from Chittagong for nearly 50 miles up to Rangamati. Opposite to the north-west point of Hajiganj a large creek ran out to the southward and south-east making the shortest passage to Habiganj from that part of the country. This creek was navigable all the year for large boats.[80] The Durgapur creek running opposite Barisal to the eastward afforded the common route from Luckipur to Bakarganj [81] and the Buriganga river, on which Dacca was situated, was navigable in the dry season for large boats.[82] At Allynya[83] a branch of the Meghna turned off to the south-east and fell into the great Meghna again at Chandpur, after taking a course of about 24 miles ; this branch named the Panghia was navigable all the year for large boats. Two miles above Allynya a large creek fell into the Meghna on the east side; this was commonly called the little Meghna and afforded the shortest passage to Silhet and Asmarygunge.[84] From Baganbary[85] a small

80 *Ibid*, p. 29.

81 *Ibid*, p. 36.

82 *Ibid*, p. 40.

83 "A small village close to Daundkandi, where the road from Dacca to Comillah leaves the river." Rennel's *Journals*, p. 44.

84 *Ibid*. Asmarygunge, a large village on the Surma in the Silhet district, about 80 miles north-east of Dacca.

85 Baganbary,—spelt Bygonbarry in Rennel's map.

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creek fell into the Luckya river during the rainy season, and allowed a much safer passage for boats than the latter.[86] Besides the Ganges, the Atri or Atrai river[87] afforded a passage from Jalanghi to Dacca, but the passage through the Ganges was 10 miles shorter. The breadth of the Atri river was from 150 to 300 yards, and "depth sufficient for the largest boats during the dry season."[88] The passage by water from Hajiganj to Dacca was about 69 miles in the months of February and March. The route was through Meggala creek and into the Ichhamati at Kardupur; then by way of Nawabganj and Churan; through Tulsi creek and into the Dhaleswari by Tagarpur and Fatllylur and up the Buriganga to Dacca.[89]

It is equivalent to Maimansingh or Nasirabad, the headquarters of the Maimansingh district. Baiganbary is mentioned by Hunter as a village with a large indigo factory near Gobindganj about 5 miles N. W. of Maimansingh. *Stat. Acc. Bengal*, Vol. V, p. 415.

[86] Rennel's *Journals*, p. 47.

[87] "This Creek, which leaves the Ganges at Pubna now goes by the name of the Ichhamati in some places and of the Atrai in others." Rennel's *Journals*, p. 81, footnote 8.

[88] "In going against the stream this river is preferable to the Ganges, on account of their being good tracking ground all the way, and few sands; but in going down with the stream the other is preferable." *Ibid*, pp. 81-82.

[89] *Ibid*, p. 193.

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Water-routes in North Bengal.

Similarly, the northern part of Bengal was also provided with water-routes through the Teesta river, the Manas creek,[90] the Ghagat creek,[91] the Purnabhaba river,[92] and the Dherla or Durla river with their branches. The Ghagat creek was navigable for boats of 150 maunds till the month of January ; the Dherla river was navigable all the year for boats of 2,000 maunds between Kurigram [93] and the great river Brahmaputra. It separated the paraganas of 'Baharbund' and

[90] "We passed the Teesta about 6 miles N. W. of Olyapour (spelt Oliapur in Rennel's map, plate 44. part 2, equivalent to modern Ulipur, head-quarters of a thana of that name and still the seat of the principal cutchery of the '*Baharbund*' Zamindar. *Bengal: Past and Present*, 1924. Vol. XXVIII, p. 192) at a small village named Tytari (probably the Totirea of the Rungpur district map); after this its course is more to the North-west. About a mile and half west from Tytari crossed the Monnas creek which is now fordable, its course is to the ESE, joining the Teesta at Calygunge." Rennel's *Journals*, p. 54. The Manas creek was one of the numerous branches of the Teesta and not the larger Manas or Banas of Assam. *Ibid*, footnote 5.

[91] The Ghagat, formerly a branch of the Teesta, but now silted up at its head.

[92] The Purnabhaba River lies considerably to the west in the Dinajpur District, and was at that time one of the main branches of the Teesta.

[93] Kurigram, on the right bank of the Dherla river in the Rungpur District.

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'Vittrebund' and joined the Brahmaputra at Baggoa.[94]

No want of means of communications ;—

Thus, there was no want of means of communication throughout the country,[95] including even the most interior corners. Perhaps it was this which led

[94] Spelt Bugwah in the Rungpur District map. Rennel's *Journals*, pp. 54-55. It may be noted here that the roads between Rungpur and Kurigram were very rough, esp ecially in the neighbourhood of the latter.

[95] Time ordinarily required in travelling from one place to another, by land routes or water-routes :—

(*a*) From Patna to Jalanghi, 20 days by boats.

(*b*) From Maudapur (at the head of the Chandna or Chunnah river) to Bhusna on the Barasia, a little to the east of Muhammadpur, 3 days through the Chunnunah and Comer Creeks. Rennel's *Journals*, p. 123.

(*c*) From Moanpur on the Chunnunah to Habiganj, 4 days by land.

(*d*) From Calcutta to Kusthia, 6 days by land.

(*e*) From Kusthia to Culna, 10 days by boat.

(*f*) From Kusthia to Jaynagore, 8 days by boat.

(*g*) From Hajiganj to Habiganj, 1 day by boat, $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 days by land.

(*h*) Mola (a small village on the Ganges above the mouth of Chandna River), from Hajiganj 1 day by boat, from Dacca 3 days by boat, from Jalanghi 3 days by boat, from Pabna 1 day by boat, from Jalanghi $1\frac{1}{2}$ days by land.

(*i*) Amidabads (Ahmirabads of the Bengal Atlas, a paragana of the Noakhali District), from Luckipur $1\frac{3}{4}$ days by land, from Hajiganj 3 *prahars* ('Hind. Pahar or Pour is

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Mr. Dow to observe :—"The easy communication by water from place to place, facilitated a mercantile intercourse among the inhabitants. Every village has its canal,

Dow's remark.

strictly a measure of time equal to a fourth part of the day and of the night.' *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 736.)

(*j*) Bakarganj, from Culna 3 days, Sewtylewry from Culna $\frac{1}{2}$ day, Govindapur from Culna 1 day, Buckinagore from Culna $1\frac{1}{2}$ days.

(*k*) From Sihenpur to Dacca, 1 day by land ; from Latanagore to Dacca, 1 day.

(*l*) From Habetnagore (probably Hybutnagar, close to Kishorganj of Atlas of India, sheet 125) to Bangram 5 *prahars* : to Lilliedapur 1 *prahar*, to Asmanygunge 4 days, to Akrasonda 3 days, to Silhet 5 days; to Dalalpur 3 days.

(*m*) From Jangalbari to Adampur, 2 days by water, 1 day by land ; to Osunpur $1\frac{1}{2}$ days; to Asmarygunge $1\frac{1}{2}$ days, to Silhet 7 days.

(*n*) From Dellipara to Asmetygunge 3 *prahars*, to Dalalpur 3 *prahars* ; to Akarsonda 1 day; to Adampur 1 day (by *dingi* boat); to Abdulpur 2 *prahars* by land and 1 day by water ; to Silhet 6 days.

(*o*) From Kurigram to Chilmari one day's journey for a *cossid*.

(*p*) "Rungpur was 4 days *cossid* from Muxadavad (Murshidabad)." Rennel's *Journals*, pp. 123-30.

(*q*) Vansittart left Patna on 5th January, 1763, arrived at Mongyr on 9th January and reached Cassimbazar on 14th January. Vansittart's *Narrative*, Vol. II, pp. 184-87.

(*r*) Vansittart proceeded in a light boat from Cassimbazar on 16th January, 1763, and reached Calcutta on the 18th of that month. Vansittart's *Narrative*, Vol. II, p. 194.

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every Perganah its river and the whole kingdom the Ganges, which falling by various mouths, into the Bay of Bengal lay open the ocean for the export of commodities and manufacturers.''[96] Now the usual statement that the want of communications at the end of the Mughal and the beginning of the British period made the villages economically independent and self-sufficient units becomes irreconcilable with the foregoing facts, which clearly show that the internal communications of the country were not very defective. We have already seen that there were roads connecting the important centres of the province with places in the extreme interior. Rennel carefully noted many places of importance along these roads.[97] It is clear that the villages of Bengal, where nature was lavish in her bounties and where the leisure of agriculturists is recorded to have been given to manufactures,[97a] had surplus produce and manufactures over and above their necessary consumption ; but even if these surplus commodities be supposed not to have been carried from one part of the country to

Explanation of economic isolation of the villages;

[96] Dow's *Hindoostan*, Vol. I, cii.

[97] Such places have now sunk into insignificance and many of them are no better than ordinary villages, *e.g.*, Lacaracondah in the 'Burdwan to Lacaracondah road,' Birkity in the 'Calcutta to Patchwary Road.' *Vide ante*.

[97a] *Vide* later.

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another, the villages being economically isolated from one another, it would be due not to the *want* of means of communications, but to some other factors which the unstable and insecure political conditions of the time had produced. If there was a self-sufficiency at all, it was forced on them and was not a normal condition of their existence. The weakening of the central authority had increased the rapacity of the Mugs [98] and the Portuguese pirates, and the frequent incursions of the Marathas [99] into the heart of Bengal had made commerce unsafe ; the same weakening had led to the growth of numerous economic barriers set up by zamindars and other local powers. Perhaps it was the necessity for the defence against these dangers, the fear of losing their merchandise in the hands of the plunderers or brigands, and the dimensions that the tolls had reached, together with the extortions and corruptions in internal trade, that drove the village within its shell and fostered internal cohesion and unity within it. Commerce came to be

—economic isolation not due to the want of means of communications;

98 Letter to Court, January 27, 1748; Consultations, December 4, 1752; Letter to Court, January 10, 1758, para. 97; Letter to Court, December 31, 1758, para. 84; Bolts' *Considerations*, p. 163, footnote.

99 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 230-44 (Vaṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣad Patrikā, Vol. XIII, Part IV, p. 220). *Vide* the chapter on "*Commercial Relations.*"

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monopolised by those only who could withstand such dangers (like the European Companies and their clients or up-country adventurers like the Sikhs, the Marwaris, the Rajputs, etc.) and the poor villagers had to remain satisfied within the limits of their villages accepting only '*dadans*' and suffering for that. What was at first accepted out of necessity at last grew into a habit, as the weak government of the Nawabs, followed by the double government's misrule, gave a free scope to the growth of these evils. Thus, weakness of the central authority, want of strong governance in the country, the ravages of the Marathas, the Mugs and other bandits and robbers, and the avaricious habits of the Company's servants might be regarded as probable causes for the economic isolation of the villages from one another.

—probable causes of economic isolation of the villages.

A few words may be added with regard to the conveyances used at that time. Bullock carts[100] and

Conveyances.

[100] (*a*) "He selected a few carts for carrying on his articles." Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, p. 67.

(*b*) "Putting young lady (Lutf-un-nisa) with her mother in his own Rutt or covered carriage he (Siraj) had set out for that place (Azimabad) being drawn by an excellent pair of these oxen, that make usually thirty or forty *cosses* a day." *Se r-ul-Mutakherin*, Vol. II, p. 94. Haji Mustafa, the translator of Seir-ul-Mutakherin, had himself seen those oxen, when they were presented later on

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palanquins [101] were of very common use on land. Sometimes, the palanquins were richly adorned and were sold at high prices. In 1757 the Council in Calcutta resolved to purchase a palanquin set with silver tassels, for the use of the Cassimbazar factory, on Rs. 400.[102] Besides horses [103] and elephants, camels were used for travelling purposes in certain parts of Bihar. Kṛṣṇacandra Ghoṣāla, the hero of Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, hired two camels for two hundred rupees in course of his journey from Patna to Gaya.[104] Boats of various kinds were used in journeys or transports through rivers.[105] In his journey from Calcutta to Murshidabad in 1760 A.D., Governor Vansittart paid '3 *budgerows*' at Rs. 3 per day, 20 *hoolucks* of 6 oars at 28 rupees

by Mirjafar to Mr. Watts, and out of curiosity, he had measured their amazing bulk and height.

101 "He went quickly on a palanquin." *Tīrthamaṅgala*, p. 67. Long, *op. cit.*, p. 54; *Consultations*, November, 1758.

102 *Proceedings*, February 28, 1757.

103 Rāmaprasāda refers to coaches or carriages drawn by a pair of horses:—"A pair of horses, attached to a carriage, jump and run quickly and can go ten miles a day." Rāmaprasāda, *op. cit.*, p. 69 B.E.

104 *Tīrthamaṅgala*, p. 67.

105 Stavorinus, *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, pp. 464-68. "Price of Calcutta Boats of 90 mds. Hire per month 4 dandies Rs. 12, one Mangey (majhi=steersman) Rs. 4." Rennel's *Journals*, p. 123.

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per month, 22 *hoolucks* of 8 oars at Rs. 38 per month, 12 *hoolucks* of 10 oars at Rs. 40 per month, 2 *hoolucks* of 4 oars at Rs. 24 per month.[106] We find in the list of the Governor's travelling charges in 1763 that he hired three *budgerows* of ten oars at Rs. 10 each per month.[107]

Postal Communications.

There were arrangements for *daks* or postal communications throughout the country, and runners were employed to carry letters from one part of it to another. Those runners were of two classes, *viz.*, *tappies* (ordinary dak-runners) and *cassids* (mounted postmen). We have already seen that there were six '*post-roads*' running from Calcutta to six important directions, and through these roads the runners usually passed. The *cassids* could ordinarily run 25 to 30 miles a day,[108] but sometimes they could manage to "travel with great rapidity, and letters from Cassimbazar sometimes arrived at Calcutta in as short a time as 27 hours. Accordingly Mr. Watts' letter of 2nd June (1756), saying that the Nabob had arrived at Cassimbazar reached Calcutta next day."[109] Early in 1758 *cassids* were "fixed at the different stages between

106 *Proceedings*, November 25, 1760.
107 *Proceedings*, March 14, 1763.
108 Rennel's *Journals*, p. 131.
109 Hill, *Bengal in 1756-57*, Vol. I, p. 126.

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Calcutta and Murshidabad."[110] In 1748 there were *dak*-runners between Cuttack and Ganjam;[111] but they were exceedingly indolent and it was proposed by the Company to substitute mounted post-men for them[112] in the line of Madras. But we find that between March and September no communications from Calcutta reached Madras for which the Governor of Calcutta remarked that it was "not worth while to put the Company to the expense of Kasids (mounted postmen)" when they had "nothing to advise."[113] In 1763 the faujdar of Mir Kasim at Rajmahal obstructed the *dak*-runners and thereby stopped for sometime the communication between Calcutta and Patna which lay through the Calcutta-Benares post-road.[113a] There were daily *daks* from Calcutta to Patna, to Murshidabad and to Dacca. In 1768, Mr. C. Williams was appointed "to superintend the Kassids or mounted postmen to be sent to the different factories. The same year a Kassid post was established between Calcutta and Ballasore *via* Midnapur and Jellasore but very bitter were the complaints of the postmen of the

110 *Proceedings of the Select Committee*, 18th February, 1758.

111 *Cf.* Calcutta to Gunjam Road in Rennel's *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar*, pp. 29-31.

112 *Consultations*, February, 1748 A.D.

113 Long's *Selections*: *Introduction*, LIII.

113a *Proceedings*, 30th June, 1763 A.D.

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difficulty in procuring oil and the almost impassable jungles they had to tread." Ordinarily letters from Murshidabad reached Calcutta within 2 to 4 days,[114] though, as has been already noted, under exceptional circumstances these could be sent more quickly; from Balasore letters reached Calcutta within 7 or 8 days.[115] Rangpur was "four days' *cassid* from Muxadavad (Murshidabad)." A *cassid* usually took one day to run from Kurigram to Chilmari (the intervening distance between the two places being 30 miles) and from Rungpur to Kurigram (the intervening distance between the

[114] (*a*) "On the 20th we received a letter from Mr. Luke Scrafton, dated the 18th inst....." *Proceedings of the Select Committee*, 22nd February, 1758, Firminger's *Bengal Historical Records* (1758), p. 12.

(*b*) "In consequence of your letter of the 24th ult. (*i.e.*, September) which I duly received on the 29th at Cassimbazar, I returned here the 5th inst." Letter from J. Brohier to Drake, *Proceedings*, Oct. 13, 1757 A.D. It would thus appear that a distance of about 150 miles was covered in 2 days ; this would be impossible under any other postal system, except regular relay and of horsepost or post-coaches. Compare what has already been noted about ' post-roads.'

[115] (*a*) "We this day received a letter from John Burdett at Ballasore, dated the 1st instant advising of his....." *Proceedings*, December 8, 1759 A.D.

(*b*) "Received two letters from Mr. Charles Stafford Playdell at Ballasore, dated the 17th and 18th February." *Select Committee's Proceedings*, 24th February, 1758 A.D. Firminger, *Bengal H. R.*, p. 16.

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two places being about 25 or 30 miles).[116] The Zamindars and the people of those parts of the country, through which the *daks* or postmen passed, had to supply them with provisions and other necessary articles. The Nawab of Bengal wrote to the President of the Council in Calcutta on 30th September, 1764:—"Dawks have from of old been stationed from Choonacolly to Jellasore to bring news from these parts. At present, according to the ancient custom Bunmolly (Vanamali) is appointed chief of the dawks, and I accordingly wrote to you some time ago to desire that you give orders to the Zemindars, fowzedars and other officers of Burdwan and Midnapur, etc., to supply the said dawks with necessaries."[117] Francis Sykes, Resident at the Nawab's darbar, wrote to the Secret Committee in Calcutta on 31st October, 1765:—"Representations of late have been made to me by the Zemindars of different villages, that the King (the Mughal Emperor) is fixing Dawks from Illahabad (Allahabad) to this place, and Calcutta; that it will be a very great borthen (burden) to the inhabitants in many parts of the country if they are under a necessity of supporting them with the usual necessaries having already both the Company's and the Nabob's Dawks to provide for and request they may be relieved from so heavy a grievance."[118]

116 Rennel's *Journals*, p. 131.

117 *Mindapur District Records*, p. 18.

11 Bolts, *Op. Cit.*, *Appendix*, p. 142.

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SECTION II : *Manufacture, Industries and Handicrafts.*

Bengal rich in the production and manufacture of commercial goods.

Bengal being provided with many avenues for trade, was also rich in the production of commercial goods. She produced "cloth of all kinds, most beautiful muslins, silk, raw or worked."[1] It has been already noted in the chapter on '*English Factories and Investments*' how there was a great demand for Bengal manufactures in the markets of England and other European as well as Asiatic countries and in the other provinces of India itself. The Select Committee in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 26th of September, 1767 :—"Its (Bengal's) manufactures found their way to the remotest parts of Hindostan and specie flowed in by thousand channels that are at present (1767) lost and obstructed." Of course agriculture formed an important occupation of the bulk of the people, but "the vacation from agriculture," as Mr. Orme has remarked, left "a

High demand for Bengal manufactures in Europe, Asia and other provinces of India.

[1] Hill, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 216. *Hadiqat-ul-Aqalim*, f. 113*a*.

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much greater number of the inhabitants, than can be spared in others, at leisure to apply themselves to the loom. So that more cotton and silk are manufactured in Bengal than in thrice the same extent of country throughout the empire and consequently at much cheaper rates. The greater part of these manufactures and of the raw silk, is exported; and Europe receives the largest share; the rest goes by land and sea to different parts of the Empire."[2] Thus in Bengal agriculture and manufactures went hand in hand. In different parts of the province the weavers produced silk and cotton cloths of various qualities (superfine, fine, etc.). Rightly did Mr. Pattullo remark that the "demands for Bengal manufactures can never lessen, in regard that their quality is so peculiar to that country, that

Agriculture and manufactures went hand in hand in Bengal.

[2] Orme, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 4. In modern times the main defect of Indian agriculture is just the absence of this employment of leisure to manufactures. Our agriculturists are occupied only for a part of the year, the rest of it being spent in idleness, intemperance and unthrifty pursuits. Neither is there intensive scientific production engaging all the time and energies of the cultivators and their families for the whole year, nor is the leisure of all, who live on the soil, devoted to textile industries like silk, cotton, linen, etc. From this standpoint the much-abused '*Carkā*' creed has in it an element of economic sanity.

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no nation on the globe can either equal or rival them.'' [3]

The weaving manufactories "were dispersed throughout the country'' and a distinct kind was woven in each district.[4] Some important towns like Maldah, Harial, Serpur, Balikushi and Cogmari within the Zamindari of Rāṇī Bhavānī of Natore were famous for manufacturing the following species of piecegoods:—(*a*) "for the Europe markets, *cossaes* (khas = cloth with diagonal patterns), *elatches*, *hummums*, *chowtahs* (or *chautānis* = sheets folded four times),[5] *ootally*, *soosiess* (*susi* or stripped fine-coloured fabrics), *seersuchers*; (*b*) for the markets of Bussorah, Mocha, Jidda, Pegu, Acheen and Malaca, the different sorts of *cossaes*, *baftas* ("woven"-cotton stuffs), *saunoose*, *mulmulls*, *tanjebs* (tanjib = a kind of fine muslin), *kenchees*, etc.''[6] From the *aurungs* at Rungpur, Goraghat,[7] Santose Buddal, all being situated within the zamindari of the Raja of Santose, the English East India Company was supplied with *sannoes*, malmals (fine plain muslins),

Localisation of manufactured goods.

[3] Pattuloo, *An Essay upon improving and cultivating Bengal*, p. 25. London, 1772.

[4] Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 474.

[5] Birdwood, *Industrial Arts of India* (1880), p. 246.

[6] Holwell, I. H. E., p. 193.

[7] The author of Hadiqal-ul-Aqalim (f. 115b) refers to the manufacture of silk cloths at Goraghat.

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and *tanjibs*.[8] The towns like Burdwan, Khirpai, Radhanagore, Dewanganj and Balligissagur, all situated within the zamindari of Raja Tilakchand of Burdwan, manufactured the following sortments of piece-goods, *viz.*, *dooreas* (stripped cloths), *terrendams* (tarandam), *cuttanies*, *soosies*, *soot romals*, *gurrahs*, *sestersoys*, *santon coupees*, *cherriderries*,, *chilys custas*, *doosootas* (dosuti =coarse cotton cloth), and several places of lesser importance within his jurisdiction manufactured other inferior sortments of cloth, as *seerbunds*, *gullabunds*, etc.[9] Silk and cotton cloths of a rather inferior quality were manufactured within the Bankura district, specially near Vishnupur,[10] and the East India Company was provided with a large quantity of *gurrahs* from Elambazar, the "principal town of trade" within the Birbhum district.[11] Various kinds of muslin and other cotton cloths were manufactured at Midnapur. We find the following species of piece-goods in the list of goods to be provided at Midnapur for the year 1763:—(1) *charconnaes* (cārkhānā)—chequered muslins, 500 pieces; *chucklaes* (cāklās)—mixed silk and cotton—1,000 pieces; no piece of *gingham*; *niallaes* (blue cloth)—

8 Holwell, I.H.E., p. 194.
9 *Ibid*, pp. 195-96.
10 *Ibid*, p. 200.
11 *Ibid*, p. 202.

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(*a*) ordinary, 2,000 pieces, (*b*) fine and (*c*) superfine, 2,000 pieces; *peniaṣcoes* (according to Birdwood made of *pineapple* fibre)[12]—1,000 pieces; *sannoes* ('*saṇ*,' *i.e.*, flaxen or linen cloth)[13]—(*a*) Ballasore, 500 pieces, (*b*) of midling prices, 500 pieces, (*c*) fine and thick, 500 pieces, *sursuchers* (turbans=śira-śekhara), 200 pieces; *shalbasta* (śāla-prastha, shawls), 600 pieces. It was further written: "If you have any other species of goods not mentioned here you may send us two or three pieces of them for a sample. You must take care in all coloured goods that the colours may be light and lively. Gurrahs and other calicoes for printing, hummums excepted, are in good demand for want of long cloths. We, therefore, recommend it to your particular attention for a supply of these articles over beyond what we have ordered till you hear from the choramandel (Coromandel) of that we can be supplied with a large quantity of long cloths, by which information you are to govern yourself."[14] At Balasore and Pipli were produced "manufactures of cotton in

[12] Cactus fibres were used for coarse cloths even in 19th century in Hijli coast (Midnapur) and elsewhere, where cactus of different varieties grew wild. 'Paniasco' apparently represents a Bengali or Oriya original 'Panasika' or 'Panaska,' meaning 'woven out of *panasa* or pine-apple fibres (of the cactus class).'

[13] 'Sāṇī,' linen, is known as early as Vedic literature.

[14] *Midnapur District Records*, pp. 8-9.

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sanis (sanus), *casses* (khesis=wrappers or robes), *dimities*, *mulmuls*, *silk romals*, and *romals* of silk and cotton; *gurrahs* and *lungies* ("head and waist cloths" according to Birdwood)." [15]

Radhanagore was "famous for manufacturing cotton cloths and silk romals and handkerchiefs." [16] Coarse blue handkerchiefs were manufactured at Baranagore, near Calcutta.[17] Certain places in Birbhum (the most important being Elambazar) were centres of cloth manufacture.[18] Nadiā and Murshidabad were especially famous for the manufacture of various kinds of cotton and silk cloths. *Malmals*, *cossaes* and other species of cloths were manufactured in places like Santipur, Barran, etc., within the zamindari of Raja Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā, for the markets of Europe.[19] Grose remarks that "the country about it (Cassimbazar) was very fertile, and the inhabitants remarkably industrious, being employed in many useful manufactures. They generally furnish 22,000 bales of silk a year, each bale weighing 100 lbs. They have also *tassaties*, and the most beautiful cotton cloths of the country." [20]

15 Abbe de Guoyn, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 496-97.

16 Grose, *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. II, p. 236; Abbe de Guoyn, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 498.

17 Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 519.

18 Holwell, I. H. E., pp. 201-202.

19 *Ibid*, p. 202.

20 *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. II, p. 240.

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Stavorinus also gives a similar description.[21] We find in the letters from the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory to the Council in Calcutta, dated the 8th and the 13th of December, 1759, that the former required two lacs of rupees only for purchasing '*November Bund*' raw silk. Similarly in the year 1763 they asked for 9 lacs of rupees as advances for puchasing silk. Rennel wrote about Cassimbazar :—" Cossimbazar is the general market of Bengal silk and a great quantity of silk are manufactured here, which are circulated throughout great part of Asia; of the unwrought silk, 300,000 or 400,000 lbs. weight is consumed in the European manufactories." Stavorinus notes that " printed cottons, commonly called chintzes (*chits*)" were " not manufactured " in Bengal "except near Patna, in the province of Bahar," which were called "from the name of the place—Patna chintzes."[22]

Premier position of Dacca in the manufacture of fine muslins and cotton cloths of different species.

But of all the places in Bengal, Dacca occupied the premier position in the manufacture of fine muslins and cotton cloths of different species.[23] Rennel has remarked that Dacca had "a vast trade in muslins; and manufactures the most delicate one, among those that are so

21 *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 472-73.

22 *Ibid*, p. 464.

23 Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 474.

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much sought after in Europe."[24] The author of Ryaz-us-salatin has noted that 'white muslin' was "excellentl y manufactured there."[25] Weaving work was carried on, more or less, in almost every village of the Dacca district but the important places where muslins were manufactured were the cities of Dacca, Sunargong, Dumroy, Teetbari (situated on the eastern side of the river Luckia), Junglebari (lying on the eastern side of the Bramhaputra river) and Bazetpur[26] (about 18 miles from Junglebari) Sunargong was famous for muslins of thin texture and also for flowered fabrics. The author of Ryaz-us-salatin has remarked :—"A species of very fine muslin is manufactured there. And in the Mouza of Kathrahsunder there is a reservoir of water ; whatever cloths are washed there are turned into white linen."[27] Dumroy which stood on the river Bunsi, a branch of the Bramhaputra, about 20 miles west of Dacca, supplied the weavers with the greater part of the fine thread required for the Dacca looms.[28] Besides those places, muslins of various kinds were manufactured in Moorapara, Babapara and other villages on the banks of the

[24] *Memoir of the Map of Indostan*, p. 61.

[25] p. 40.

[26] *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Cotton Manufacture at Dacca by a Resident*, p. 4.

[27] p. 40.

[28] *A Descriptive and Historical Account, etc.*, p. 8.

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Luckia river and mixed cotton and silk cloths at Abdullapur in Bikrampur paragana.[29] Coarse fabrics were produced at Kalokopa in Dacca, and Jalalpur, Narainpur, Chandpur and Serampur in Tipperah.[30]

The looms at Dacca produced cloths of various degrees of quality, "ranging from the fine gossamer muslin, the attire of the inmates of the zananas of native princes, down to coarse thick wrapper worn by the poor ryot." [31] Stavorinus remarks: "Muslins are sometimes wove so fine, that a piece of twenty yards in length, and longer, can be inclosed in a common pocket tobacco box. The whole is done with a very trifling apparatus and Europeans are surprised to behold the perfection of manufacture, which is exemplified here in almost every handicraft, effected with so few and such imperfect tools." [32] In the letter from the Court of Directors to the Council in Calcutta, dated the 19th of December, 1755, the following species of cloths are referred to as being manufactured at Dacca: *sarbatis* (semi-transparent like a glass of '*serbat*,'—fruit-juice), *malmals, alaballies*,

29 *Ibid*, p. 9.

30 *Ibid*.

31 *Ibid*, p. 41.

32 *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 413. "A common sized Dutch tabacco-box, such as they wear in the poket, is about eight inches long, half as broad, and about an inch deep." *Ibid*, p. 413, foot-note.

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tanjeeb, terrindams, nainsooks ('pleasure of the eyes,') *seerbandeonnaes, dooreas* (striped muslins), *jamdanies* (figured muslins), etc. In the letter to the Court of Directors from the Bengal Council, dated the 27th of January, 1749, we find the names of the kinds of cloths manufactured in different places in Bengal; these have been duly noted in connection with the respective places in the chapter on 'English Factories and Investments.' It may be added here that Islamabad (Chittagong) also supplied the Company with cloths. The Council in Calcutta wrote to Mr. Verelst at Chittagong on the 28th of September, 1761: "We with pleasure observe the good qualities of the cloth you have sent us the care you have taken in the improvement of our manufactures." [33] 'A prodigious quantity' of coarse cloths was manufactured near about the English factory at Collinda.[34]

Cloths supplied from Chittagong and Collinda.

Each variety of muslin was manufactured at Dacca by "fabrics of three or four assortments or degrees of quality," which were distinguished at the Company's factory by the "terms '*ordinary*,' '*fine*,' '*superfine*,' and '*fine superfine*.'" [35] The muslins were plain,

Dacca muslins,—'fine,' 'superfine,' 'fine superfine,' plain, striped, chequered, figured or coloured.

[33] *Bengal: Past and Present*, Vol. XXVII, p. 20.

[34] Rennel's *Journals*, p. 75.

[35] *A Descriptive and Historical Account, etc.*, p. 42.

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striped, chequered, figured or coloured.[36] Dacca was famous for embroidery and flowering works on cloths. We have already seen[37] that there are many references in the contemporary records about cloths being sent by the Company from Calcutta to Dacca for embroidery and flowering work. "From Dacca," wrote Abbe de Guyon in 1744, "come the best and finest Indian embroideries in gold, silver, or silk, and those embroidered neck cloths and fine muslins which are seen in France."[38]

Embroidery and flowering works on cloths.

So prodigious was the quantity of cloths manufactured and so many looms were worked in Bengal, owing to the growth and continuance of an almost world-wide demand during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, that besides the large quantity of raw cotton produced within the province,[39] cotton had very often to be imported from Bombay and Surat. Certain references on this point have been already noted ;[40] a few more may be added here. It is stated in Fort William

Cotton imported from outside Bengal,—

36 *Ibid*, p. 41.

37 Chap. on "*English Factories and Investments.*"

38 Quoted in Taylor, *op. cit.*

39 For references to the production of cotton in Bengal districts and their use for manufactures, *vide* Sections on '*Agriculture*' and '*Asiatic and Inter-provincial Trade.*'

40 Chapter on '*English Factories and Investments.*'

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Consultations of the 4th of December, 1752 :— "Agreed that we write by her (that is the ship Hector) to the gentlemen there (*i.e.*, Bombay), advice them of the disposition of our tonnage, and desire them to provide a cargo of the best Broach cotton for the Durrington that she may be returned to as early in the season....." Referring to Natore, Holwell remarks :—" This country produces also *coposs*, or Bengal cotton, with which the above sortments of goods are in part manufactured, but the produce does not bear any proportion to the consumption, so that they are indebted to foreign markets for this article, and chiefly to the port of Surat." [41] Stavorinus also refers distinctly that the Bengal looms required the importation of cotton from outside the province, chiefly from Surat.[42] The Dacca district produced the finest cotton [43] out of which the greater portion of the Dacca muslins were manufactured. The Commercial Resident of Dacca in the year 1800 remarked :—" A tract of land extending from Feringybazar, twelve miles south-east of Dacca, along the banks of the Megna to Edilpore, twenty miles north of the sea, occupying a space of about forty miles in length, and in some places as far as three in breadth, and situated in the pergunnahas

[41] I. H. E., p. 193.
[42] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 473.
[43] *Ibid*, p. 474.

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of Kidderpore, Bickrampore, Rajenagur, Cartickpore, Serampore, and Edilpore, is allowed to produce the finest cotton (*kāpās*) grown in the Dacca province, and, I believe, I might add, in any part of the world since no cotton that has yet been compared with it, whether the produce of India, or of the islands of Mauritius or Bourbon, whose cotton is celebrated for its superior quality, has been found equal to it." [44] The other cotton-growing tracts noticed by him were "the banks of the Luckia from the Dulaseree river to a little above Roopgunge, about sixteen miles in length, and a few miles on the banks of the Brahmaputra, north of the Dulaseree" which together with the country mentioned above furnished "the greater part of the kapas used in the Dacca province." Of the rest, some was grown in Buldecal, Bowal, and Alephsing, and some imported from Bussora in the adjacent district of Rajeshye (Rajsahi)." [45]

Finest cotton produced in the Dacca disirict ; important cotton-growing tracts.

[44] *A Descriptive and Historical Account, etc, pp.* 11-12.

[45] *Ibid.* Right up to the beginning of the 20th century the tradition amongst Dacca weaving families was that the cotton (tree-cotton) grown for earlier Dacca muslins was grown in the black soil of the districts adjacent to Dacca town in the north of it, of which area 'Bowal' (Bhowal State) was a part ; the black soil extends into North Bengal.

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Subsidiary manufactures and handicrafts.

It would be interesting to note in this connection the available details about the subsidiary manufactures and handicrafts of Bengal at that time. Carpets of various patterns such as *satarañci*, *dulicā* and *gālicā* were manufactured in certain places.[46] Weaving of jute-cloths was also common ; there are references to *gunnies* (jute-cloths) in the lists of the East India Company's investments [47] from Bengal, and the author of Hadiqat-ul-Aqalim writes about the manufacture of jute-carpets (*ṭāṭs*) at Goraghat.[48] Bengal exported sugar to the different Asiatic countries [49] and was an important centre of that industry. Stavorinus notes how sugar was manufactured there :—"They bruise the cane, between two chamfered rollers of hard wood, two and a half feet long, and of about six inches in diameter. These lie horizontally, one above the other, in two rests, so fixed, that the rollers cannot be moved, out of their relative position to each other, and leaving a space of a quarter of an inch between them. Each roller has four spokes or handles, at the end by which they are turned in opposite directions by

Weaving of carpets, and jute-cloths.

Manufacture of sugar.

46 Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, pp. 106 and 108.

47 *Vide ante.*

48 F. 115 B.

49 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 19.

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two men. The sugarcane being put between the rollers, is thus bruised, or flattened, to the thinkness of a quarter of an inch, and its sap is pressed out, and received in a large earthen pot, placed for that purpose, under this simple machinery. About eight or ten feet off, are eight other pots, fixed in holes, into which they fit exactly, and which are made in the earth in a longitudinal direction. The dried canes, from which the sap has been expressed, are used as a fuel under these pots, into which the sap is put, and boiled into sugar." [50] He also describes [51] the processes of manufacturing saltpetre, opium and gumlac, which were important articles of commerce. [52]

Saltpetre, opium, gumlac.

Excellent guns were manufactured in different parts of the province. We find in the Seir-ul-mutakherin that Mir Kasim "was amassing and maufacturing as many guns and flint-muskets as he could, with every necessary for war." [53] Haji Mustafa, the translator of that work, remarks :— "the European reader may possibly hear with surprise, that these firelocks manufactured at Mongher proved better than the best Tower-proofs, sent to

Manufacture of guns.

50 *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 140.
51 *Ibid*, pp. 474-80.
52 *Vide ante*, Chapter 3, Sections 1 and 3.
53 Vol. II, p. 9.

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India for the Company's use ; and such was the opinion which the English officers gave then, when they made the comparison by order of the Council of Calcutta. Their flints were all Rajmahal agates, and their metal more mellow. And even to-day, 1786, Colonel Martin, a Frenchman, who has greatly distinguished himself these twenty-two years in the English service, has at Lucknow a manufactory where he makes pistols and fuzils better, both as to lock and barrel, then the best arms that come from Europe. The comparison has been repeatedly made and Sir Elijah Impey, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Calcutta, carried to Europe one pair of these pistols." [54] Rennel noticed a great gun at Dacca [55] and three others at Murshidabad. We find in Consultations, dated the 4th of December, 1752, that gun carriages were made both in Calcutta and Cassimbazar, but in the former place these were made cheaper and better than in the latter.[56]

[54] *Ibid*, footnote. Northern and North Eastern India had a tradition of efficient fire-arms manufacture since at least the 15th century, and it was not now for the first time that Indian-made fire-arms competed with the European-made article: thus the Rumi artillery of Gujrat was fully met by Sher Shah. Jaunpur in the first half of the 15th century specialised in fire-arms ; Assam has a tradition of an earlier manufacture of them.

[55] *Memoir of Map of Hindustan*, p. 61.

[56] Long, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

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There is a reference to the manufacture of gunpowder in the letter from the Court of Directors to the Council in Calcutta, dated the 3rd of March, 1758:—"As you have all the materials on the spot and cheaper than in any other part of India, we are well satisfied that, with proper management, sufficient quantities may be produced not only for our settlements in Bengal but for our other settlements."[57]

Iron manufactories in Birbhum.

Rennel[58] has noted several places in Birbhum where iron manufactories existed. He writes:—(*a*) "Forges for iron are wrought at Dyoucha (Deocha) and Muhammad Bazar (a village between Suri and Deocha). The ore is brought from the Mullarpur Purgannah;" (*b*) "Iron mines are wrought near Damra (16 miles from Suri) and forges at Damra and Mysara;" (*c*) "Iron mines are wrought at Kistnagur." We have descriptions of the works of the silversmiths, blacksmiths and other mechanics in certain contemporary accounts like Ives' *Voyage*,[59] Craufurd's '*Sketches of the Hindus*,'[60] and Stavorinus'

Skill and workmanship of the mechanics.

[57] *Ibid*, p. 120. The reference is to the great saltpetre supply of Bihar, which, as we have already noted, the other European powers greedily tapped.

[58] *Journals*, pp. 109-11.

[59] Pp. 52-53.

[60] Vol. II, pp. 98-99.

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Voyage,[61] which testify to their superior skill and workmanship. Members of each class of mechanics confined themselves to "one sort of work, so that a goldsmith will not work in silver nor a silversmith in gold. In the *aurungs* or looms, a weaver will only weave one single sort of stuff during his whole life, unless he is compelled to take another in hand." [62]

Boat-making:

Huge and well-fashioned boats were constructed in different parts of Bengal, and boat-building industry formed the occupation of many carpenters. These boats[63] were of various kinds, as for example, (*a*) *bajrā*,[64] (*b*) *mayurpankhī*,[65] (*c*) *koshkhān*,

61 Vol. I, pp. 411-13.

62 *Ibid.* This specialisation improved quality of the articles.

63 Vijayarāma's Tīrthamaṅgala, p. 9. We have a description of ship-building in Dvija Vaṁśīvadana's '*Manasāmaṅgala*,' a Bengali work of the 16th century. *Typical Selections from Old Bengali Literature*, Part I, p. 220.

64 Such boats having arrangements for convenience were used by the Europeans and the rich Indians for travelling purposes. These were of various sizes, "from twenty-five to sixty feet in length and longer." Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 465-66.

65 These were "very long and narrow, sometimes extending to upwards of an hundred feet in length, and not more than eight feet in breadth ;.....these boats are very expensive owing to the beautiful decorations of

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(*d*) *pālwārā* (long, low and narrow boats with sails fit for moving in shallow waters),[66] *seriṅgās*,[67] and *pāñcways* (small boats).[68]

Haji Mustafa, the translator of Seir-ul-mutakherin, has referred to the manufacture of ice in Bengal. He writes :— "The mountains of, or rather hills of Rajmahal, at three or four days' north-west of Murshidabad, produce natural ice to the thickness of a shilling ; but besides such ice, the Indians have a method of manufacturing artificial ice with boiled water (and no other) exposed the whole night to a still weather, where it congeals in plates of earth to the thickness of a crown. But (singularity !) this boiled water needs be sheltered from the wind not only by sinking the plates in an excavation two feet deep, where they are ranged in rows but also by screening it with mats of straw. This ice is manufactured from November to February and

Ice manufacture.

painted and gilt ornaments which are highly varnished and exhibit a considerable degree of taste." *Ibid*, p. 468, foot-note.

66 *Ibid*, p. 467.

67 Rennel's *Journals*, p. 68. For full description of '*seriṅgās*,' *vide ibid*, foot-note. In the evening of 27th May, 1464, Rennel "counted no less than 400 fishing boats " in the space of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles between the " villages (on the Jalanghi) of Malacola and Sela (probably a corruption of Sara)."—*Ibid*, p. 14.

68 Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 468, foot-note.

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when a sufficient quantity has been procured, it is thrown in heaps, and rammed down in a closet made up of thick walls with a door made fast, and thick covered with straw; nay the closet itself is further defended from the heat by an additional roof of straw rising some feet above the other.'' [69]

Decline of cotton and silk industries,—a process continuing through many years.

Cotton and silk industries were by far the most important of all mentioned above. The decline of these industries, once so famous, is indeed a pathetic story in the economic history of the province. It did not begin or end at any definite day, but was a long process continuing through many years. Much has already been said on this subject by such eminent writers as Mr. R. C. Dutt, Mr. C. J. Hamilton and Dr. J. C. Sinha. But we have to note that, just as in other spheres of economic life, the influence of the Maratha invasions on the manufactures of Bengal was also highly disastrous. "Insecurity of person and property overwhelmed the merchants and weavers, and the manufacture of the country was thereby greatly affected. Many of the inhabitants, weavers, husbandmen fled, the Aurungs were in a great degree deserted, the lands untilled, and the wretched fugitives who

Influence of the Maratha invasions.

[69] Vol. II, p. 158, foot-note.

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had escaped with nothing but their wives and children, and whatever they could carry in their hands, thought there was no safety for them until they arrived on the eastern shore (of the Padma river).''[70] Even *gurrahs* and similar other piecegoods were available with great difficulty.[71] The ruinous effect of the Maratha ravages was felt on the silk manufactures also ; thus we are told that the "weavers and inhabitants fled, silk (was) often carried away wett and on the Reels, and piecegoods before (being) manufactured—the one wound off and the other finished in utmost hurry and confusion.''[72] In 1751 a letter from the Cassimbazar factory to the Council in Calcutta stated : "The dearness of raw silk and silk piecegoods for some years past, they find, is owing to the Mahrattas constantly entering Bengal, plundering and burning the people's houses and destroying the chief Aurungs, from whence the workmen have fled to distant places, and not to any malpractice in the gentlemen there.'' In the same year Mr. Kelsall wrote from Bulrumgurrhy that the disturbances

70 Holwell, I. H. E., p. 123.

71 Letter to Court, dated 13th August, 1743, para. 10 ; *ibid*, dated 3rd February, 1743, para. 91 ; *ibid*, dated 4th February, 1746, paras. 16 to 34 ; *ibid*, dated 22nd February, 1746, para. 13 ; *ibid*, dated 30th November, 1746, paras. 7-9.

72 Letter to Court, dated 8th January, 1742, para. 61; *ibid*, dated 30th November, 1746, para. 15.

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occasioned by the return of the Marathas had prevented him from being able to purchase any ready-money goods as most of the weavers had been obliged to abscond. [73]

Thus, in the light of these foregoing facts, it may be asserted that the economic degeneration of Western Bengal began since the days of Allahvardi (if not earlier, from Murshid Kuli's time). To hold that the oppressions of the Company's servants and *gomastas* were alone responsible for the decline of Bengal's manufactures and industries, and that this began immediately after Plassey, is to look at the thing from only one side of it. No body will deny that their conduct exercised a destructive influence on the industries and manufactures of Bengal, and that their oppressions increased as a result of the power gained by them after Plassey. But this also is to be admitted that there were already certain cankers eating into Bengal's economic vitality. Her capital, manufactures and agriculture had been disturbed and had lost respectively, their original strength, purity and productivity, when the dreadful storm of the Maratha invasions had blown over her soil. What the Company's servants did was that they carried this bad state of things to a worse one by their unjust and cruel treatment of the native traders, manufacturers and weavers. In fine, it may be fairly asserted that

[73] Letter to Court, 4th February, 1751 A. D.

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the economic decline was a natural sequel to the general political disorders which had begun many years before 1757 but which were certainly aggravated after that date due largely to the intervention of the East India Company. Referring to the economic decline of Dacca, Rennel wrote in August 1765 :—" We may easily account for its decline, by the continual wars which have of late years wasted the whole country, and in the fomenting of which we have had too large a share." [74] Similar was the case in other parts of Bengal.

Economic decline,— a sequel to the general political disorders.

[74] An unpublished letter of Major James Rennel, Bengal, August 31, 1765, printed in *Bengal: Past and Present, July-September*, 1933.

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Section III.—*Agriculture.*

Agriculture has always formed an important element in the economic life of the people of Bengal. Mr. Dow remarks :—"Agriculture constitutes the wealth of every state not merely commercial. Bengal, a kingdom six hundred miles in length and three hundred in breadth, is composed of one vast plain of the most fertile soil in the world. Watered by many navigable rivers, inhabited by fifteen millions of industrious people, capable of producing provisions for double the number, as appears from the deserts which oppression had made; it seems marked out by hand of nature, as the most advantageous region of the earth for agriculture."[1] Dow's observation is supported by an almost similar statement of another contemporary European writer, Mr. Orme, who writes :—"Rice which makes the greater part of their food is produced in such plenty

Agriculture an important element in the economic life of the people ,—Bengal's advantageous position ;—

remarks of Dow and Orme.

1. *Dow's Hindoostan*, Vol. I, cxxxvi. It would appear from this that in Dow's time (*c.* '67-'69) half a century's disorders affecting zamindars and ryots had brought down the area under cultivation and the population to about half its normal extent.

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in the lower parts of the province, that it is often sold at the rate of two pounds for a furthing; a number of other arable grains, and a still greater variety of fruits and culinary vegetables, as well as the spices [2] of their diet, are raised as wanted, with equal ease: sugar, although requiring more attentive cultivation, thrives everywhere..." [3]

Chief agricultural products.

The chief agricultural products were paddy,[4] wheat, *rabi* crops, sugarcane,

[2] Hadiqat-ul-Aqalim, fs. 113a and 115a.

[3] Orme, *Military Transactions of the British Nation in Hindoostan*, Vol. II, p. 4. A contemporary description (27th January, 1770) of manufacture of sugar in the villages is given in Stavorinus' *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 130; the same process has been in use for centuries in the country; a noticeable point there is the use of the byeproduct of the cane fibres as fuel for the manufacturing process. Abbe de Guoyn notes (A New History of the East Indies, Vol. II, p. 498) that places like Bussundri, Fresindi or Goraghat produced "vast quantities of the finest sugar in Bengal."

[4] We may incidentally take note of the different kinds of paddy mentioned in contemporary literature of Bengal: Hariśaṅkara, Hāti-pāñjar, Harakuli, Hāti-nād, Hñici, Halud-gñuḍā, Kele-kānu, Kele-jiḍā, Kāliā, Kārtikā, Kayakacchas, Kāśī-phul, Kapota-Kaṇṭhikā, Kālindī, Kaṭaki, Kusumā-śālī, Kanaka-cuḍā, Dudha-rājā, Durgā-bhoga, Paradeśī, Dhusturā, Kriṣṇa-śālī, Koñār-bhoga, Konor-purṇimā, Kalmi-latā, Kāmodagarimā, Khejur-thupī, Khayer-śālī, Kṣema-gaṅgājala, Gayā-bālī, Gopāla-bhoga, Gaurī-kājal, Gandha-mālatī, Guyā-thūpī, Cāmara-dhāli, Candana-

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tobacco, cotton,[5] betel, etc. It is generally supposed that Bengal never produced wheat. Stavorinus, however, states clearly that besides rice Bengal produced "also very good wheat, which was formerly used to be sent to Batavia." But this wheat-growing and export were discouraged "in order to favour, as much as possible, the corn trade of the Cape of Good Hope."[6]

Their localisation;

We may try to localise the agricultural products in different parts of the province. Beginning from the north we find that Rangpur was a well-cultivated region, its chief products being wheat, sugarcane, and tobacco.[7] The country round Cochymeda (a large village and *ganj*) was planted with tobacco in many places. The road from Cochymeda to a small village named Luckypur, seven miles along the south-west

Rangpur.

śālī, Chatra-śālī, Jaṭā-śālī, Jagannātha-bhoga, Jāmāi-lāḍu, Jālārāṅgī, Jhingā-śālī, Balāi-bhoga, Dhunyā, Nimui, Nandana-śāli, Rupanārāyaṇa, Pātsā-bhoga, Pairā-rasa, Pipiḍā-bāṅkā, Til-sāgarī, Bñāk-śālī, Bakāi-buyāli, Dārvaṅgī, Bñāk-cuḍā, Buḍā-matra, Rāma-śālī, Rāṅgā-mete, Rāma-gadā, Lakṣmī-priya, Ļāu-śālī, Saṅkara-jaṭā. Rāmeśvara's *Śivāyana*, *Typical Selections*, Part I, pp. 136-37.

[5] Parker, *The War in India*, p. 2. London, 1772 A.D.

[6] Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 391.

[7] Rennel's *Journals*, February, 1766, p. 68.

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ank of the Sanalota River, was mostly through paddy-fields. Much tobacco was also cultivated in the neighbourhood of Dewanganj, a large village and the limit of Rangpur towards Kuch Behar.[8] The country between Baganbarry (Bygonbary or Mymensingh) and Chilmari was quite flat on the west side of the river Brahmaputra and was covered mostly with paddy-fields;[9] the country on both sides of the river Bramhaputra between Baganbarry and Mobaganj was full of paddy-fields, interspersed with groves of betel and other trees.[10] The country round Olyapour[11] was well-cultivated, "every spot of ground being either sown with or planted with betel trees."[12] The country from Olyapour to Kaliganj (on the Bramhaputra), a few miles below Olyapour, was full of paddy-fields and betel groves.[13] In Purneah, paddy, wheat, pulse

Mymensingh.

Purneah.

[8] *Ibid*, p. 66.

[9] *Ibid*, p. 48.

[10] *Ibid*, p. 63.

[11] "Spelt Oliapour in Rennel's map (plate 44, part 2). The modern Ulipur, headquarters of a thana of that name and still the seat of the principal kutchery of the Baharbund Zemindars." *Bengal: Past and Present*, 1924, Vol. XXVIII, p. 192.

[12] Rennel's *Journals*, p. 54. The country round Olyapur belonged to the Baharbund paragana.

[13] *Ibid.*

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and mustard seeds, and other food-grains, all kinds of corn and pepper, grew in abundance.[14] Rennel calls it "a fine wheat country and exceedingly well-stocked with cattle."[15] Pepper grew in abundance in Sarkar Mahmudabad,[16] which comprised north-eastern Nadia, north-eastern Jessore and western Faridpur. Wheat and opium were produced[17] in the borderland between Purneah and Rangpur.[18] The tract from Barasat to Jessore was open and well-cultivated, the products being paddy, gram, etc. The road from Calcutta to Hajiganj lay mostly through paddy-fields. Rennel noticed a great number of tanks on the roads, and a fine '*topa*' of cocoanut and betel trees at Chaldibarya, six miles from Barasat.[19] Much paddy and cotton were sown in the neighbourhood of the *nullah* Mahespunda,[20] five miles south-east of the Jalanghi. The

Jessore.

14 *Ryaz-us-salatin*, p. 38.

15 Rennel's *Journals*, p. 71.

16 *Ryaz-us-salatin*, p. 43.

17 Stavorinus describes the process of opium production in Bihar, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 464-77.

18 Rennel's *Journals*, p. 73.

19 Rennel's *Journals*, pp. 86-87. "The country in general (round Jingergatcha) is open and well-culivated ; in the groves there are great numbers of cocoanut trees, and a kind of trees named Cazir-Gatch (the bastard datepalm) from whence they made a coarse kind of sugar." *Ibid*, p. 89.

20 This creek was the head of the Mathabhanga, also

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country round the villages of Serampur and Gurgoree (in the Nadia District) was well-cultivated and produced much paddy.[21]

Nadia.

Extensive lands were cultivated on both sides of the Ganges in the Pubna district, particularly on the west side, where much paddy was grown,[22] *e.g.*, the territory adjacent to Habbaspur on the Ganges, south-west of Pubna, was an important paddy-producing centre. Betel was produced abundantly in the neighbourhood of Sunapara (Sonapara), about nine miles down the Chunnunah Creek,[23] and in the village of Bandorse or Gopalpur, lying a mile below the head of the Eastern Comer.[24] The country on both sides of the Arti river was well-cultivated and produced much paddy and cotton.[25] Cotton and paddy, sufficient for local consumption, were also cultivated in many places between Dacca and Jafarganj.[26] Much paddy was grown in the Binetty island above

Pubna.

Dacca.

known for the first forty miles of its course as the Kumar, Comer or Comare of Rennel. Rennel's *Journals*, p. 13.

21 *Ibid*, p. 15.

22 *Ibid*, p. 17.

23 *Ibid*, p. 18.

24 *Ibid*, p. 19.

25 *Ibid*, p. 82.

26 *Ibid*, p. 27.

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Hajganj.[27] The portion of the country from Binetty island to the head of the Nawabganj creek (seven miles below Hajiganj) was sown with paddy and cotton.[28] The land round Azimpur (a village in the present Faridpur district) was well-cultivated and produced sugarcane, tobacco and betel-nut,[29] and betels were grown near Gaurnadi.[30] Those parts of country lying between Doycalley,[31] and Rajabary, Chandpur and Luckipur,[32] about Luricule,[33] in the neighbourhood of Adampur, and

[27] "Binetty island is about five miles long and near two over, and lies in a N. W. B. N. and B. E. S. S. direction; it has 11 villages on it, but scarce a single tree. Being low it is mostly sown with paddy, of which I judge there is at least 3½ square miles. The banks of the river opposite to this island are mostly sown with paddy and have a great number of villages on them." *Ibid.*

[28] *Ibid*, p. 28. [29] *Ibid*, p. 35.

[30] Gaurnadi lay nine miles below a creek running from Habiganj. According to Rennel, betel-leaves were the chief products here.

[31] Rennel's *Journals*, p. 37.

[32] "Chandpour (Chandpur), a small but remarkable village, lies on the south bank of the Niagonga near the point of its conflux with Meghna. It is situated about 31 miles from Dacca, 11 from Rajabary, and 23 or 24 for Luckypur." *Ibid*, p. 38.

[33] *Ibid*, p. 39. "Luricule, once a remarkable village, lies almost half way betwixt the Ganges and Meghna, is about 28 miles S. E. from Dacca and 3 miles ESS from Rajnagore. Here are the ruins of a Portuguese church, and of many brick houses." *Ibid.*

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at the head of the Luckya river, produced a large quantity of betel-leaves.[34] Five miles above Feringybazar, where the Buriganga river fell into the Icchamati, the country was well-cultivated and produced paddy and cotton,[35] and similarly the part about Sultansuddy (Sultan Shahadee), situated about 16½ miles trom Dacca on the western bank of the Meghna, was also an important paddy-producing area.[36] The part of the country about Osunpur, fifty miles north-east of Dacca, produced betel-leaves.[37] These were also produced in the lands about Chanderganj, lying fifteen miles south-east of Luckipur.[38] The lands stretching for 14¾ miles between Chanderganj[39] and Colinda were extremely fertile and produced much paddy, and a little quantity of cotton ; the immense quantity of cotton required there for the manufacture of cloths was brought from distant places.[40] Betel-leaves were grown in an abundant quantity

34 *Ibid*, p. 46.

35 *Ibid*, p. 40.

36 *Ibid*, p. 45.

37 *Ibid*, p. 47.

38 *Ibid*.

39 "..... this village (*i.e.*, Chanderganj) is situated in Puruguna of Amidabad which is an extensive and fertile province." *Ibid*, p. 75.

40 *Ibid*. Rennel remarks:—"I saw but little cotton growing, so that the immense quantities of cotton used in the manufacture of their cloths must be brought from distant places."

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in the locality round Cassidya.[41] Much cotton was produced in certain parts of Birbhum, *e.g.*, in paragana Barbucksing (Barbaksing), that is, the country round the Surul Factory, and in paragana Surroofsing (Swarupsingh), nineteen miles east of Suri.[42] Lands round Suri produced much paddy.[43] Bankura[44] and Burdwan[45] produced *capas* (cotton) sufficient only for local consumption. Indigo was cultivated in certain parts of Maldah.[46]

Various kinds of *rabi* crops, such as, *māskalāi, moog, cholā, arahara, masurī, barabaṭī, maṭara, māḍuā, bhurā, yava* (barley), *khesāri*, etc., are referred to in contemporary literature.[47] There we get also some idea of the chief agricultural implements and of cultivation and field work. The following '*cāṣāstras*' (agricultural implements) are mentioned in Rāmeśvara's *Śivāyana*,—*codāly, kste, lāṅgal* (plough), *jowāl, fāl, biḍe, mai*.[48] Bo h buffaloes and oxen were yoked to the plough,

Agricultural implements,— cultivation and field works.

41 *Ibid*, p. 76.
42 *Ibid*, pp. 109-11.
43 *Ibid*.
44 Holwell, I. H. E, p. 200.
45 *Ibid*, p. 196.
46 *Ryuz-us-salatin*, p. 46.
47 *Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa*, lines 235-36; Bhāratacandra, chap on "*Dillite Utpāta-varṇana*"
48 Rāmeśvara's *Śivāyana*, p. 44 (B.E.)
49 "*Yamera nikaṭa haṭe mahiṣere āni* |
Tomāra eṇḍete dāo jute Śulapani" ||
("Get a buffalo from Yama and yoke it along with your ox." (*Ibid*, p. 45.)

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and cowdung was used to manure the fields.[50] The owners of the fields regularly inspected the work of the labourers, and occasionally sat by the fields until the labourers finished their day's work and plodded their weary steps homewards. This is evident from a passage in Rāmeśvara's *Śivāyana*, which further describes the process of rooting out weeds from the fields (*i.e.*, how the labourers separated the weed from the paddy-plants and finished their work in one tract after another as quickly as possible).[51] Irrigation formed an important part of the field-work and the preservation of water was a principal object, " for which the high lands " were " moulded in by great banks to collect the water that falls from the mountains ; " and these reservoirs were " kept by the government for the public benefit, every man paying for his portion of a drain." [52] Water preserved in tanks was also of much use in this respect.[53] Sometimes the proprietors of lands came into collision with one another for enjoying precedence in the matter of taking water for their fields from a particular

[50] " Vṛṣa o siṁhera nāda āche ta jamiā ।
Sāra kari māṭhe tāhā dāo charāiā." ॥

" There is much of animal dung collected there,—scatter it in the field as manure." *Ibid*, p. 45.

[51] *Typical Selections*, etc., Part I, p. 131.

[52] Parker, *The War in India*, pp. 5-6.

[53] Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 396.

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tank.[54] There is a passage in Rameśvara's *Śivāyana*, which describes how water was sometimes drained off from overflooded fields.[55]

Agriculture affected by the calamities of the time—

The Maratha invasions and the ravages of the Portuguese and the Mugs, affected agriculture for the time being to some extent.[56] The Maratha irruption of the mid-eighteenth century was indeed a great calamity; it did, at least for several years, disturb the even tenor of life of the bulk of the people in Western Bengal. Under the pressure of the repeated incursions of the Marathas and the ravages of the Portuguese and the Mug pirates, the villagers experienced great difficulties in following their peaceful vocations and activities. After 1757 the oppressions of the revenue farmers and *aumils* added to the miseries of the agriculturists,

[54] Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 74.

[55] P. 53.

[56] "Chāṣā kaivarta yata yāya palāiā |
Bichana baladera piṭhe lāṅgala laiā" ||

("The agriculturists of the *Kaivarta* caste took to their heels with their ploughs, and with paddy seeds on the back of their bullocks.") Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 305-306. Compare:—

"Chele ghumālo pāḍā jurālo bargī elo deśe |
Bulbulite dhāna kheyeche khājānā diba kise! " ||

"The children have fallen asleep, the quarters have become quiet (but) the Bargis have entered into our land,—the bulbuls (a kind of bird) have eaten up paddy grains;—how to pay the rent! "

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till they had their cup of distress filled to the brim in the great famine of 1770 A.D. About the year 1772 Mr. Pattullo observed :—" The unwise practice of pushing up the rents every year in Bengal, has afforded a full demonstration of the destructive consequences, by having rendered many of these lands desolate." [57]

The East India Company did not at first care about agriculture and their trade in agricultural products was limited. The factories in the interior of the country had all been established in the manufacturing centres ; and nowhere do we meet with instances of their having any arrangement for stocking agricultural goods. But in the year 1758 the Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors that they would encourage the planting of cocoanuts, betels and tobacco, according to the instructions they had received in their letter of 3rd March, 1758. Sometimes the agricultural products were exported to different parts of India, and to various other countries outside India.[59] Thus Bengal rice and wheat went

Attention of the Company to agriculture.

[57] *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

[58] Letter to Court, 31st December, 1758, para. 119.

[59] " The rest goes by land and sea to different parts of the Empire, and other countries to which they likewise send rice, sugar, betelnut, ginger, long pepper, turmerick, and variety of other drugs and productions of the soil." Orme, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 4. Also Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 391.

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to Kashmir and Tibet in exchange for musk, gold and woolens, and Bengal wheat also competed with Cape of Good Hope corn trade.

Export of agricultural products.

In this connection it will be interesting to know something about the *forest products* of Bengal at that time. Sarkar Bazuha [60] had a large forest containing ebony trees, which were used in the construction of buildings and boats. In Sarkar Silhat (roughly modern Silhet),[61] delicious fruits such as oranges, etc., were obtained; "China-root" [62] was produced there and much of aloe-wood was grown in its mountains.[63] Large quantities of cardamom and cassia leaf, and very large trees of ebony, were grown in Purneah, and

Forest products.

60 *Ryaz-us-salatin*, p. 43. "Sarkar Bazuha extended from the limits of sarkar Barbakabad and included portions of Rajshahi, Bogra, Pabna, Maimansingh and reached in the south a little beyond the town of Dacca. 32 mahals; revenue 987, 921." *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. II, p. 137.

61 *Ryaz-us-salatin*, p. 43.

62 "An once famous drug known as 'Radix Chinae' and 'Tuber Chinae' being the Tuber of various species of Smilax (N. O. Smilaceal, the same to which Sarsaparilla belongs). It was said to have been used with good effect on Charles V, when suffering from gout, and acquired a great repute. It was also much used in the same way as Sarsaparilla. It is now quite obsolete in England, but is still held in esteem in the native pharmacopoeias of China and India." *Hobson-Jobson*, 153.

63 *Ryas-us-salatin*, p. 38.

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the mountains of the Murang (at six days' journey to the north of Purneah) supplied the *murāṅgī wood*, also called *bāhādurī*.[64] The jungles on the eastern side of Bateese Hazary (modern Jalpaiguri) [65] gave a large supply of timber, much of which was brought down from the Bhutan mountains by the freshets.

[64] Rennel's *Journals*, pp. 69-70.

[65] *Ibid*, p. 68.

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Section IV.—*Markets and Prices of Articles.*

Markets in the cities. Rāmaprasāda's description of the market in Burdwan.

Generally every important city [1] or village had a market within its boundary. Bazārs existed even in places which were not trade-centres.[2] The markets in the cities contained shops of almost every article of necessity as well as luxury, *e.g.*, sweetmeats, sugar, bhurā (unrefined sugar), milk, ghee, betel-leaves, betel-nuts, mace, cloves, nutmeg, sandal, saffron, firewood, etc., etc.[3] Rāmaprasāda's description of the market in the city of Burdwan, which was then "for populousness and plenty of provisions superior to most cities in Bengal,"[4] deserves notice in this connection. He writes, "Beyond these the poet (Sundara) saw the king's market with

[1] This is clear from the description of cities in Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamaṅgala*, where the author has carefully noted the market places visited by him and his master Kṛṣṇacandra Ghoṣāla. Also Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 113 and 513.

[2] "Nattour has a large bazar but is a place of no trade." Rennel's *Journals*, p. 83.

[3] Bhāratacandra, Chap. *Mālinīra besātira hisāb.*' From this chapter we can also get an idea of the articles of daily consumption in a middle-class family.

[4] Seir-ul-mutakherin, Vol. II, p. 377.

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thousands of foreign merchants sitting there. There were hundreds of traders and shop-keepers and countless gems, pearls, and rubies. There were various kinds of fine and beautiful cloths such as *vanāt* (felt-cloth), *makhmala* (velvet), *paṭṭu*, *bhuṣṇāi*,[5] *baṭādāra*, *dācāiā*,[6] *māldai*,[7] and various other kinds, much liked by the *Āmirs* (the rich). There were many *bilātī* (foreign) articles of fancy price or of fashionable designs,[8] which were, however, heaped together for want of customers. Everything was cheap and easily available..... Bāghāi Kotwāl, with pride equal to that of the Lord of Death and with red eyes, was present there on an elephant's back." [9] This is a description of the jewellery and the cloth departments of the market in Burdwan, but a city market also contained various other shops dealing in different articles, *e.g.*, grain *golās* (barns), grocers' shops, shops of the craftsmen like *śñākhārīs* (shell-workers), *kñāsārīs*, etc.,[10] as we find from several

[5] Refers to cloths manufactured in Bhuṣṇā Pargana.

[6] Cloths manufactured in Dacca District.

[7] Cloths manufactured in Maldah District.

[8] According as we read beś kimmater or beś kismater ; the latter is more probable since in the next sentence the writer speaks of the cheapness of all goods. *Vide* Appendix.

[9] Rāmaprasāda's *Vidyāsundara*, p. 6.

[10] "The boats soon reached the market-place at Bhagwāngolā, and all shouted out 'Hari, Hari!' They were highly pleased to see the market, and walked through

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contemporary descriptions left by Vijayarāma. The towns of Bowāngañj, Shibgañj, Sorupgañj, and Jamalgañj, situated within the zamindari of Rāṇī Bhavāṇī, were "famous markets for grain ; as their names imply."[11] Bhagwāngolā, near Murshidabad, was an important market for grain, oil and ghee ; there the customs duties on grain only amounted to three lacs of rupees a year.[12] Ponjelli, standing on the eastern bank of the Hugli river, had a market for corn and exported a great quantity of rice.[13]

Markets in Calcutta.

At that time Calcutta had about ten or eleven such *bazars*, *viz.*, Sobha Bazar, Dobhapara Bazar, Hatkhola Bazar, Bag Bazar, Charles Bazar, Shyam Bazar, New Bazar, Begum Bazar,

the whole city on foot. The market, beautiful to look at, extended 4 *kos* (eight miles) and was full of numerous *śñākhārīs* (shell-workers), *kñāsārīs* and weavers. The streets were full off grocers' shops, and they all spoke highly of the market. There were also innumerable grain *golās* (rice and paddy barns) there. They left the place after halting there for two days." Vijayarāma's *Tīrthamañgala*, pp. 39-30. Almost similar descriptions have been given of markets in other cities also, *e.g.*, Rajmahal (*ibid*, p. 43); Kaligañj (*ibid*, p. 40); Futwah (*ibid*, p. 62) ; Cassimbazar (*ibid*, p. 190); Cutwah (p. 193); Nadia (p. 203).

[11] Holwell, I.H.E., p. 193,

[12] *Ibid*, p. 194.

[13] Grose, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 236,

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Gasthola Bazar, John Nagore, Gunge or Mondy Bazar situated in the district of Govindapur.[14] The several articles on which duties were levied at the Gunge or Mondy Bazar were: rice, paddy, gram, and all other kinds of grain, and also on tobacco, ghee, cloth, oil, *gunnies*, *capas*, seeds, betel-nut exported ;—" in short on every article that comes within the denomination of common food, or the common necessaries of life." The duty collected by the farmer of the Gunge on rice, at 1 maund a rupee, was the nearest 8 per cent. and on every other article 3 pies sicca a rupee, or 1 rupee 9 annas per cent.[15] The several articles[16] brought for sale in the Sutanuti market and Sobha Bazar had an established charge or rate, from one *gonda*

[4] *Consultations*, October 9, 1752 A.D. '*Calcutta* in the olden times—Its localities' in *Calcutta Review*, 1852.

[15] Holwell, *Indian Tracts*, pp. 210-16. The income from the farming of the Gunge from 1738 to 1752 were, as follows:—

Year.	Amount.	Year.	Amount.
1738	6,501	1746	13,201
1739	6,505	1747	17,002
1740	9,025	1748	18,203
1741	6,655	1749	14,004
1742	6,655	1750	10,100
1743	7,600	1751	12,010
1744	8,500	1752	22,760
1745	11,200	...	...

[16] For the different articles, *vide* Holwell, *Indian Tracts*, pp. 210-16.

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of *cowries* to 6 *pun* per diem, on each shop, bundle, bag, or piece according to the different species of goods. Gram, mustard seed, wheat imported from Hugli and other places paid 6 *gondas* of *cowries* on each sicca rupee, sugar on each bag 2 annas, ghee on each dupper 6 annas, and honey on each dupper 2 annas. [17] The duties levied in other markets, as well the articles on which they were levied, greatly resembled those in the above-mentioned two *bazars*. The great Bazar, under the district of Dee(?) Calcutta, was farmed out in three partitions under the heads of—(*i*) *Jow Bazary*, or where duties were levied on greens, fish, roots, pān (betel), etc.,—common necessaries of life, (*ii*) where duties were levied on iron, ghee,

[17] Holwell, *Indian Tracts*, pp. 210-16. Sutanuti market and Sobha Bazar yielded from 1738 when these had been first farmed till 1752, as follows :—

Year.	Amount.	Year.	Amount.
1738	3,504	1746	4,172
1739	3,589	1747	4,370
1740	3,397	1748	4,422
1741	4,012	1749	4,599
1742	3,532	1750	4,849
1743	3,758	1751	5,000
1744	3,991	1752	7,510
1745	4,332	...	...

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sugar, betel-nut and merchandise,[18] (*iii*) where were collected duties of *koyally* or *jouldary* (weighing). The first of these was farmed in November ; the second and the third in April.[19] Iron paid a duty of Rs. 1-15-3 per maund, when both exported and imported ; Balasore stone dishes Rs. 16 per 100 dishes; Balasore stone cups Rs. 8 per 100 cups, betel-nut Rs. 1-15-3 per cent. both on imports and exports ; pepper, copper, tootenague,

[18] *Ibid.* The Jow Bazary produced from 1738 when it had been first farmed till 1752, as follows:—

Year.	Amount.	Year.	Amount.
1738	1,650	1746	2,185
1739	2,029	1747	2,185
1740	1,980	1748	2,285
1741	1,765	1749	2,400
1742	1,804	1750	2,400
1743	1,994	1751	2,600
1744	2,007	1752	3,500
1745	2,307	...	...

[19] This produced, from 1738 when it had been first farmed till 1752, as follows:—

Year.	Amount.	Year.	Amount.
1738	1,101	1746	1,347
1739	1,155	1747	1,345
1740	1,156	1748	1,345
1741	1,156	1749	1,367
1742	1,250	1750	1,662
1743	1,150	1751	2,100
1744	1,200	1752	2,100
1745	1,320	...	...

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lead, dammer, cotch, chanks (śaṅkha = conch-shells), 2 per cent. on imports and exports; sugar 4 annas per each ox-load of two bags; honey, wheat and wax, 2 per cent. on imports and exports. Rice and grain imported paid 2 seers and 8 chattaks per each ox-load; rice and grain exported paid 1 seer 4 chattaks a rupee; gram imported paid 6 *puns* 1 *cowrie* a rupee; turmerick, ginger, sandal wood, red lead, long pepper, saltpetre, lac, gunnies, etc., paid 2 per cent.; tobacco imported paid 2 annas 3 pies per ox-load; tobacco exported 2 per cent. and 2 *puns* of *cowries* for each ox; brass plates paid 8 annas per maund on both imports and exports. In the third partition of the great Bazar was collected the *jouldary* or weigh-man's duty of 1 seer 4 chattaks a rupee, levied on all rice, paddy, gram, wheat, etc., imported in the whole market.[20] The farmer of the Sutanuti market in Calcutta (which was held twice a week,

[20] This farm produced for the Company from 1738 to 1752, as follows:—

Year.	Amount.	Year.	Amount.
1738	726	1746	1,164
1739	717	1747	1,164
1740	718	1748	1,180
1741	731	1749	1,219
1742	1,108	1750	1,727
1743	700	1751	1,900
1744	1,036	1752	1,900
1745	1,139	...	...

Holwell, *Indian Tracts*, pp. 210-16.

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on Thursdays and Sundays) collected duties from retailers of cowries, cotton, thread, apothecaries' shops, oil shops, hardware shops, tyar shops, milk shops, jaggree shops, weavers' shops, braziers' shops, potters' shops, shoe-makers' shops and from shops dealing in sweetmeats, betels, cucumbers, trees, roasted rice, tobacco, firewood, straw mats, bamboos, betel-nut, greens, sugar-canes, plantains, tamarind, salt, cloths, rice, venison, paddy.[21]

Mr. Holwell writes that, for a few years since 1738, the method of farming the Company's *bazars* in Calcutta had been greatly corrupted in the hands of Govindaram Mitra. The farms were not sold at a public action or by outcry in presence of the Zamindar but the prices were settled in the house of Govindaram Mitra, who under fictitious names took most of the good ones for himself and disposed of the rest that were more precarious, to his friends and relatives ; he reported the prices to the Zamindar for confirmation and several " pāṭṭās " were ordered to be drawn out accordingly.[22] Govindaram Mitra was definitely accused of frauds in connection with farming of the *bazars* for the years 1749, 1750 and 1751. He was most violently accused by Mr. Holwell, but Mr. Cruttenden and Mr. Manningham were of opinion that Govindaram Mitra was

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid,* pp. 180-82.

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not guilty of frauds, "as the farms had been sold at a public cutchery, due intimation being given beforehand, and as there was no order that did not entitle the said Mitra to an equal right to purchase as well as any other." The majority in the Council in Calcutta were of opinion that Govindaram was not accountable for any gains or other advantages that he had gathered on the farms for these three years.[23]

Regulation of the markets.

Strict order was maintained in all the city-markets by the Zamindars' officers. One of the important functions of the Kotwals (the Police Inspectors) was to look after the markets and to prevent all sorts of disorders in such places. One of these officers, who remained in charge of the markets, examined the weights and measures, as well as the quality of the provisions sold, and regulated the prices of articles. Anybody violating these regulations was subjected to a severe punishment.[24] Thus we see that the markets were

[23] Public Proceedings, dated 11th October, 1752.

[24] (*a*) "Being sensible that iron and leaden weights by frequent use will lose considerably, we therefore now send you a set of brass standard weights with proper scales and triangles by which you are immediately to regulate the weights at your Presidency, and you are carefully to preserve the said standard weights for the same purpose at all times hereafter." Court's letter, February 11, 1756 A. D.

(*b*) "Neither could anybody sell anything in less than

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definitely organised and controlled by the Zamindars in their respective localities, to the convenience of the people in general. For retail purchases *cowries*, which formed the lowest medium of exchange in Bengal, were more in prevalence than coins.[25]

Price of Articles.

In 1729 the prices of the necessaries of life in Murshidabad were as follows :—(*a*) *bansephool* fine rice, first sort, 1 md. 10 seers a rupee; second sort, 1 md. 23 seers a rupee, and third sort 1 md. 35 seers; (*b*) coarse *desna* rice, 4 mds. 15 seers a rupee; (*c*) coarse *poorbie* rice, 4 mds. 25 seers a rupee; (*d*) coarse *munsarah*, 5 mds. 25 seers a rupee; (*e*) coarse *kurkashallee* rice, 7 mds. 20 seers a rupee; (*f*) wheat (first sort) was sold 3 mds. a rupee; (second sort) 3 mds. 30 seers a rupee; (*g*) barley was sold 8 mds. a rupee; (*h*) *bhenot* (a kind of grain for feeding horses)

the proper weight nor could anybody cheat others by increasing the price. The Gāji punished him, who violated the reuglations; the customers as well as the shopkeepers were all under his orders. '*Virāśī ojan*' (82 weight) was the standard weight in the market; nowhere was the weight more or less than this standard." *Samasera Gājira Pāuthi*, *Typical Selections*, etc., Part II, p. 1853.

25 "These being insufficient, I took some *cowries* from others." Bhāratacandra, *op. cit.*, Chap. '*Mālinīr besātir*

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4 mds. 35 seers a rupee; (*i*) oil (first sort) 21 seers a rupee second sort) 24 seers a rupee; (*j*) ghee (first sort) 10½ seers a rupee, (second sort) 11¼ seers a rupee.[26] In 1738 rice was sold from 2 mds. 20 seers to 3 mds. a rupee and *cāpās* 1 md. for 2 to 2½ rupees.[27] But by the year 1751,[28] the prices had risen nearly 30 per cent. more. In that year rice was sold 1 md. 32 seers for 1 rupee 4 annas, grains 1 md. a rupee, wheat 1 md. 32 seers for 1 rupee 4 annas, flour 1 md. 3 seers for 3 rupees, oil 1 md. for 5 rupees. Just the next year, the prices had gone further up,—rice being sold 1 md. 16 seers for 2 rupees 8 annas, grain 1 md. 12 seers for 3 rupees 5 annas 6 pies, wheat 1 md. 6 seers for 4 rupees 11 annas, flour 1 md. for 8 rupees, oil 1 md. for 11 rupees.[29]

hisāb;' Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 461-62. He notes that in Bombay, *badams* (almonds) sometimes formed the lowest medium of exchange. The value of *cowries* in Bengal varied ; according to Bolts, 4,000 to 4,800 cowries made a rupee ; according to Stavorinus, 4,800 to 5,200 ; and according to Rickard, 2,560.

26 *Fort William Revenue Consultations*, dated November 29, 1776, quoted in *Appendix 15 to the Sixth Report, 1782.*

27 *Consultations*, December 11, 1752.

28 *Ibid.*

29 Letter of Govindaram Mitra to the President and Governor, dated 20th November, 1752. *Vide* Long's *Selections from the Unpublished Records of the Government, Record* No. 99.

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In Consultations, November 9, 1751, we find that the Company's Government in Calcutta did not realise that year the annual duties on rice and oil, amounting to nearly Rs. 500, in consideration of the great distress and hardship of the people owing to the dearness of those two articles.[30] Further, the price of rice was lowered and fixed by the Government in the following way: for good *November bund* rice 35 seers a rupee, and ordinary rice 1 md. 10 seers a rupee.[31] The Zamindar was directed "to give public notice in all the market places that no person should exact higher prices than hereafter specified under a severe penalty." In 1754 fine rice was sold in Calcutta at $32\frac{1}{2}$ seers a rupee, and coarse rice 40 seers.[32] The prices of cotton[33] and raw silk[34] had also increased considerably by that time.

Factors enhancing prices.

This increase of prices was due principally to four factors:—(*i*) the ravages and plunderings of the Marathas, (*ii*) the imposition of heavy

[30] Long, *op. cit.*, No. 69, p. 27. The Zamindar was asked to give public notice thereof. Mr. Holwell, who was the Zamindar at that time, was however opposed to the remission of duty on the ground that the money would not go to the poor but to the dealers.

[31] Despatch to Court, January 2, 1752 A.D.

[32] *Consultations*, June 10, 1752 A.D.

[33] *Consultations*, December 11, 1752. *Vide ante*, Chap. on "*English Factories and Investments.*"

[34] *Consultations*, December 9, 1751.

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duties on gross sales of the articles of prime necessity,[35] (*iii*) competition among the foreign merchants, (*iv*) occasional floods. As an example of the last factor, we find that Govindaram Mitra wrote to Mr. Drake, President of the Council in Calcutta, on the 20th of November, 1752, that the rains of April, 1751 "having overflowed the country enough to drown whatever was planted in the low grounds" caused a 'great famine' the like of which had not been known "for these sixty years past, for it rose to so dreadful a height" that many of the inhabitants had "perished within the town with hunger, a truth well-known to every one."[36]

The Maratha invasions.

The Maratha irruptions fell upon Bengal as a calamity of an exceptional kind. "Every evil, attending a destructive war, was felt by this unhappy country in the most eminent degree; a scarcity of grain in all parts, the wages of labour greatly enhanced; trade, foreign and inland, labouring under every disadvantage and oppression."[37] The Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 3rd of February, 1746: "Rice so excessive Dear, 30 seers only for a rupee, ordered the coarse not to be sold in the Buzar

35 *Consultations*, November 9, 1751.

36 Letter of Govindaram Mitra, etc.

37 Holwell, I.H.E., p. 151.

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under a maund per rupee, land Duty on Grain and Rice taken off.'' [38] About the same time the weavers at Balasore "could get only 10 seer of rice per rupee" [39] and this state of things continued there for several years. In January 1753 Mr. Mcguire, Chief of the Company's factory at Balrumgurrhy, wrote to the Council in Calcutta: "Weavers at Balasore complain of the great scarcity of rice and provisions of all kinds occasioned by the devastations of the Mahrattas, who, 600 in number after plundering Balasore had gone to the Nellegreen hill (Nilgiri hills); several weavers have brought their looms into the factory, and the few who remain declare they shall be obliged to throw in theirs and to quit the place." [39a] In contemporary literature also we find a graphic description of the state of destitution to which the people were reduced as a result of the devastations carried on by the Maratha invaders. Gaṅgārāma writes: "The Bargīs plundered and murdered all whom they could lay hold of with the result that no provision could be had; rice, pulses, '*dāl*' of all sorts, oil, ghee, flour, sugar, salt, began to be sold at one rupee a seer. The misery of the people was indescribable. Numbers died of starvation. '*Gāñjā*'

[38] Para. 105.

[39] *Ibid*, para. 67.

[39a] *Consultations*, February 1, 1753 A.D.

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and tobacco could not be purchased ; so also vegetables of all kinds. All of them from the lowest to the highest, including the Nawab himself, had to subsist on boiled roots of plantain trees." [40] This account is corroborated by the Ryaz-us-Salatin which uses almost similar words : "to avert death by starvation human beings ate plantain roots." [41] We can very well note here the extraordinarily high prices of articles in Burdwan, as mentioned by Bhāratacandra in his description of the Mālinī's marketing for Sundara, to whom she rendered a detailed account of the purchases made by her. She had purchased sweetmeats at the rate of 1 seer per 1 *kāhan* (*i.e.*, 1 rupee); ½ a seer of sugar at 8 *panas* (annas); sandalwood, cloves and nutmegs were very rare in the market ; she had purchased ghee with great difficulty after searching throughout the whole market, and a '*pun*' (20 *gandās*) of betel-leaves had been purchased by her at 2 *panas* (2 annas); eight bundles of firewood had been purchased at 8 *panas* (annas); this rate was regarded as rather extraordinary, and it was apprehended that the rate would increase day by day. This apprehension was not unfounded. Bhāratacandra completed his work in 1752, and it may be reasonably supposed that the high prices he described were due to the Maratha

40 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 234-42.

41 *Ryaż-us-salatin*, p. 342.

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invasions in Burdwan, which city had been most severely affected by these.*

Imposition of heavy duties.

The imposition of heavy duties on the necessaries of life became a source of great hardship to the people. The consumption of the absolute necessaries of life must at all times be more or less equal, inspite of variation in prices. A poor man may put off buying a new coat until the price of cloth falls, but pressed by hunger every one must buy victuals if he has money to do so. In order to meet the demands of heavy duties the merchants enhanced the prices more and more and the people were compelled to meet these high prices.

Competition among the foreign merchants.

The competition among the foreign traders was also greatly instrumental in enhancing the prices. To fill up their investments quickly, the people of the European factories offered high prices for cloths and cotton goods to the business men and weavers. The native inhabitants of Bengal had in the long run to suffer and pay these high prices for their clothings. It may be noted as an instance that the competition between the French and the English Companies increased the prices of cotton goods and cloths at Dacca in 1752 A.D.[42]

42 "That they now labour there and have done for these two years past under the inconvenience of a French Factory continually emulating the Hon'ble Company's

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Since 1754 onwards we find a gradual rising up of prices of almost every article of necessity. In Public Proceedings, January 15, 1759 A.D., it is noticed that the Company bought for the *gentoo* (Hindu) sepoys 49 mds. and 8 seers of rice at 86 Arcot rupees. About the same time cloves were selling at Rs. 16 a seer, mace at Rs. 12-2 a seer, nutmegs at Rs. 6 a seer, pepper at Rs. 25 a maund, cinnamon at Rs. 5 a seer, almonds at Rs. 25 a maund, raisins at Rs. 60 a maund.[43] In 1760 the prices of some articles were as follows: fine rice Rs. 1-15-0 for a maund, coarse, Rs. 1-10-0 for a maund, stick lac, Rs. 5-10-0 for a maund, dammer, Rs. 2-9-0 for a maund, lump lac, Rs. 7-2-0 for a maund, lothwood, at Rs. 1-9-0 a maund, iron, Rs. 7-5-0 for a maund, cotch, at Rs. 8-4-0 a maund.[44]

trade, and have advanced the price of all cloths, both coarse and fine, and obliged them to be less severe with their dalals in pricing their cloth. They have frequently told them that they were quite indifferent at their ferreting or rejecting their cloth, being sure of disposing of it advantageously to the French, that they have been as strict in examining their cloth as possible, and have returned great quantities, even considerably more than they have taken" *Consultations*, December 11, 1752 A.D. For further details on the point *vide* the chapter on *English Factories and Investments*.

[43] *Proceedings*, November 1, 1759.

[44] *Proceedings*, March 20, 1760 A.D.

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In view of the scarcity of grain of every kind in Calcutta, and of the inhabitants being reduced to great distress, the sea and land customs-masters proposed in 1760 A.D., that the "Company's duties be taken off on grain imported, till the present scarcity is over." It was consequently ordered that "all duties whatever on the importation of grain be struck off till further orders." [45] In the same year the Grand Jury of the Calcutta Mayor's Court presented to the Justices of the Sessions " as a grievance to the public, the collection of duties on all provisions and necessaries of life brought into Calcutta by land, whereby the price of every article of subsistence was enhanced to a most exorbitant degree, and the hardship was most severe on the lowest class of people." Taking this into consideration, the Council took off the land customs duties and abolished the *Chowkeys* employed in levying them ; the collector's tithe was also taken off.[46] In July 1761 the Council proposed to send a sum of money to the markets in the interior parts of the country for the purchase of a quantity of grain to be sold at an easy rate. Babu Hazarimal, a rich merchant of Calcutta,[47] offering to advance a quarter of the amount, the Council resolved to send the sum and to take the management of the purchase. Accordingly

45 *Proceedings*, June 26, 1760 A.D.

46 *Proceedings*, September 4, 1760 A.D.

47 *Calcutta Review*, 1852.

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Rs. 50,000 (the Company's 37,500 and Hazarimal's own quarter, 12,500) were advanced to Hazarimal for that purpose. It was further resolved to write to the Chief of the factory at Luckipur directing him to furnish all the grain he could procure until the beginning of October; Cassimbazar and Dacca factories were also asked for further supplies.[48] In 1762 the standard prices of various articles in Calcutta were fixed according to the following rates :—

Cokenill				No. per	rupee.
(Cochineal)	20-0-0 per seer.		Cowries, 56	p	er. cent
Cofee, Batavia	8-0-0 per maund		Dry dates	1-0	Do.
Coffee, Mocha	17-0 0	Do.	Dates net		
			Dammer burning	4-0	Do.
Coir rope (*a*)	12-0-0	Do.	(*a*)	3-12 per maund.	
Copper, Persia	40-0-0	Do.	Raw	5-0	Do.
Plate	34-0-0	Do.	Boyl		
Jappon	50-0-0	Do.	Elephant teeth 1st sort	70-0	Do.
Coir	8-0-0	Do.	Elephant teeth 2nd sort	40-0	Do.
Cotton	24-0-0	Do.	Elephant teeth 3rd sort	25-0-0	Do.

[48] *Proceedings*, July 20, 1761 A.D. Mir Kasim also complained of the dearness of grains in his letter to Vansittart, received 16th June, 1761, *Vansittart's Narrative*, Vol. I, p. 204.

(*a*) Coir rope = rope made of cocoanut fibres. Stavorinus refers to the manufacture of cordage or coir rope, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 394. Chank = śankha, conch-shell ; Dammer = resin used for pitch; Gogull = gum-resin ; Hurtall = yellow Arsenic, used for yellow paint.

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Chank (*a*)				No. per. a Rupee.	
1st sort	45-0 0	per cent.			
2nd sort	15-0-0	Do.	Frankincense	3-0	per md.
3rd sort	12-0-0	Do.	Gold thread	3-8	per oz.
4th sort	9-0-0	Do.	Gum Arabic	2-0	per md.
Small	4-0-0	per maund	Gaull	12-0	Do.
			Gogull (*a*)	4-0	Do.
			Hurtall (*a*)		
			1st sort	20-0	Do.
			2nd sort	13-0	Do.
Hinge (*a*)	100-0-0	Do.	Steel	15-0-0	Do.
Ainggrah	10-0-0	Do.	Japan wood	4-0-0	Do.
Iron, Europe	9-8-0	Do.	Salt, Persia	150-0-0	Do.
Kissmisses	15-0-0	Do.	Madras	100-0	Do.
Lead	9-8-0	Do.	Sindia	200-0	Do.
Mace	8-0-0	per seer	Ingeley	150-0	Do.
Nutmeg	4-0-0	Do.	Silver thread	3-0-0	per oz.
Pepper	40-0-0	per maund	Tobacco	10-0	per md.
Pistacha nut	2-0-0	per seer	Tin	24-0	Do.
Pistacha Flower	1- 0-0	Do.	Tootinague (*a*)	15-0-0	Do.
Quicksilver	2-12-0	Do.	Tea in catty		
Rose water	25- 0-0	per chest	1st sort	8-0	per catty
Read lead	6- 8-0	per maund	2nd sort	4-0	Do.
Raisin	12-0-0	Do.	3rd sort	1-8	Do.
Ratten	0-12-0	per bundle	Toze	25-0-0	per md.
Sandal wood	12-0-0	per maund	Vermillion	4-0	per seer
Senna leaves	15-0-0	Do.	Vordegreaze	2-8	per md.
Sugarcandy	16-0-0	Do.	White lead	8-0	Do.
			Wax Pegu	32-0	Do.[49]

Thus the prices of articles went on increasing day by day to the great distress of the people till the catastrophic famine of 1770 appeared as a terrible scourge. Just after that famine the prices became extraordinarily high [50] and in 1776 some

[49] *Midnapur Records*, No. 5, pp. 3-4.

[50] Stavorinus wrote in 1770 that owing to the high price of rice, the inhabitants of Bengal "most of whom

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articles of necessity were sold as follows: fine *bansepool* rice, first sort, 16 seers a rupee ; second sort, 18 seers a rupee, and third sort 21 seers ; coarse *desna* rice 32 seers a rupee, coarse *poorbie* rice, 37 seers a rupee, coarse *munsurah* rice, 1 md. a rupee, coarse *kurkashallee*, 1 md. 10 seers a rupee ; wheat, first sort, 32 seers a rupee, second sort 35 seers a rupee ; barley, 1 md. 13 seers a rupee; *bhenot*, 20 to 22 seers a rupee ; oil first sort $6\frac{1}{4}$ seers a rupee, second sort, $6\frac{3}{4}$ seers a rupee; ghee, first sort, 3 seers a rupee, second sort, 4 seers a rupee.[51]

could earn no more than one, or one and a half silver (penny) per day, out of which they had to maintain a wife and children, could not buy, for this trifle of money, the tenth part of the rice they wanted ; the consequences of which were, that whole families perished miserably." *Voyage to the East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 153. *Vide* also *Chahar Gulzar Shujai* by Haricharan Das ; Elliot, Vol. VIII, pp. 228-29.

[51] *Fort William Revenue Consultations*, November 29, 1776, quoted in *Appendix 15 to the Sixth Report*, 1782.

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Section V.—*Classes and Conditions of Labour: and Slavery.*

In contemporary works like those of Edward Ives[1] and Stavorinus[2] the following classes of servants are referred to as being employed by the Europeans, the Anglo-Indians and also probably by the rich Bengalees:—a chief '*dubash*,' a '*dubash* boy,' a '*conucopola*,' 'a *roundel-boy*,' a *peon*, a '*demar-boy*,' '*palanquin-boys*,' a '*compidore*,' a '*derwan*.' The duties and remuneration varied among the different classes. The functions of a '*dubash*' (interpreter)[3] were "to usher in the company of his master" and to receive messages and give answers at his door. He was always a Hindu and was usually called a *banian* in Bengal. A '*dubash boy*' always remained about his master to assist him in dressing, and accompanied him in his journey. He also belonged to the Hindu community and his pay in Bengal was Rs. 8 a month.[4] A '*conucopola*' was the chief servant of

Servants,—their duties and pay.

[1] *Ives' Voyage*, pp. 48-52.

[2] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 522-23.

[3] *Dubash* or *Dobhash* (literally 'a man of two languages'). Hobson-Jobson, p. 252.

[4] His pay at Madras was 1 pagoda and 21 sanams a month.

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his master's household and he was paid Rs. 10 a month.[5] His duties were to keep the accounts of his master's household and to arrange for the payment of the other servants' and the shop-keepers' bills. He possessed some knowledge of accounts, knew how to read and write, and always carried some *cajan*(?) leaves (for writing on) in his left hand and his iron pen in the right hand. A *'roundel-boy'*[6] carried a roundel (umbrella) over the head of his master to protect the latter, when he walked out of his palanquin, from the sun. A peon's[7] function was to carry messages from

[5] At Bombay he was styled *'purvo.'* There his pay was Rs. 5 a month and at Madras 8 pagodas.

[6] (*a*) "Some years ago before our arrival in this country they (the E. I. Company) found such sumptuary laws so absolutely necessary, that they gave the strictest orders that none of these young gentlemen should be allowed even to hire a Roundel-boy, whose business is to walk by his master and defend him with his Roundel or umbrella from the heat of the sun. A young fellow of humour, upon this last order coming over, altered the form of his umbrella from a round to a square, called it 'Squaredel' instead of a Roundel and insisted that no order yet in force forbade him the use of it." *Ives' Voyage*, p. 21.

(*b*) "He (*i.e.* Clive) enforced the sumptuary laws by severe penalties, and gave the strictest order that none of these young gentlemen should be allowed even to have a Roundel-boy whose business is to walk by his master, and defend him with his roundel or umbrella from the heat of the sun." Carraccioli, *Life of Clive*, p. 283.

[7] "He also walks before your palanquin, carries chits

place to place ; his pay was Rs. 2 a month.[8] The function of a '*demar-boy*' (or *musalchi*) was chiefly to run with a '*demar*' or torch before his master's palanquin in dark nights, but belonging to a low caste, he performed also various other servile works, such as cleansed his master's shoes, swept his house with brooms, etc., '*Palanquin-boys*' (bearers), as their names suggest, were employed to carry palanquins. They also belonged to the lower Hindu castes and their pay in Bengal was Rs. 12 each for a month.[9] A '*compidore's*' function was to go to the market for purchasing such things as fruits, vegetables, etc. He was always of a low caste and his pay in Bengal was Rs. $2\frac{1}{2}$ a month.[10] A '*derwan*' or porter used to sit at the gate of his master's house to receive messages. In Bengal a Mussalman was generally employed in this office and was payed Rs. $2\frac{1}{2}$ a month. Besides these, various other male and female servants were employed for different

or notes and is your body-guard. The more of these you keep, the grander you are thought to appear. Some gentlemen have at least 40 of them in their service." *Ives' Voyage*, p. 50.

[8] At Madras 1 pagoda and 20 sanams; at Bombay Rs. $4\frac{1}{2}$ a month. At Bombay they were called sepoys.

[9] At Bombay they were called palanquin coolies and were allowed 16 rupees a month; and at Madras 6 pagodas 6 sanams.

[10] At Madras 1 pagoda. Compidores were not engaged in Bombay.

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household works. These were *kansamas*,[11] *chabdars*,[12] cooks, coachmen, jamadars, khedmutgars,[13] grooms, crutchpurdors (?), grass-cutters, harry wench, wet-nurses, dry nurses.[14]

Strict division of functions,—remarks of Stavorinus and Ives.

There was a strict division of functions among the different castes in the society. Stavorinus writes :—"A cooley, or labourer, cultivates the soil, as his ancestors did before him. The son of a Berra, or palankeen bearer, continues to carry palankeens all the days of his life."[15] In Ives' *Voyage*, we have the following interesting passage describing the habits of the Indian servants :—"...for though each of these servants could earn double the wages in the intervals when his master has no occasion for him, yet conscious that he has a sufficiency, though bare, he sits down contented therewith chusing (choosing) rather to trifle and sleep away his time, than to enrich himself and his family by taking pains. These servants have

[11] "Consumah, Khansama,=a house steward. The literal meaning of the word is "Master of the household-gear." *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 190.

[12] Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 505. "Sāri sāri cābdār hāte hemachaḍi" ("the *chubdars* were standing in rows, with beautiful sticks in their hands"). Bhāratacandra, p. 99.

[13] *Seir-ul-mutakherin*, Vol. II, p. 355.

[14] *Proceedings*, 21st May, 1759 A.D.

[15] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 411.

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a variety of tricks also which they are sure to play upon new-commers; and where two or three of them are concerned in a knavish one they never fail to puzzle the master so as to make it almost impossible for the master ever to get at the truth. The palanquin bearers are cunning dissemblers for they will be sure to groan sadly under the weight of their new master or mistress, let them be ever so light. This is done with the views of exciting in the human breast a compassion towards themselves, and thereby acquiring some Buxie (remuneration) money..... After the servants have filled their bellies, they always betake themselves to rest on the ground, or in a window or on a table, or most commonly on the land which they prefer before anything else, because of its retaining the heat of the preceding day's sun. Upon the whole the Indian servants have both their bad and good qualities."[16]

In 1751 the wages of the coolies in Calcutta were raised to 2 *puns* and 12 *gondas* of *cowries* each for a day.[17] It is noted in Consultations, dated 31st July, 1752, that the *banians*, weighmen, *coolies*, and *peons* in Calcutta were paid by the Company in that year according to the following rates:—two *banians*, Rs. 20 each per month;

[16] Pp. 51-52.

[17] Letter to Court, 2nd January, 1752, para. 63. Thus it is evident that before 1751, the coolies were paid less than 2 *puns* 12 *gondas* a day in ordinary circumstances.

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weighman, Rs. 2-8 each per month; *coolie*, Rs. 2-8 each per month, and peons Rs. 2-8 each per month. At the beginning of the next year the pay of the brick-layers was raised to ten *gondas* of *cowries* each for a day.[18] Towards the beginning of July 1753, a brick-layer mistry demanded Rs. 14 per month, a mate Rs. 10 and brick-layers Rs. 7 each for going to work at Negrais.[19] They also insisted on getting rice, dal, ghee and salt for their daily food. But for working in Calcutta proper they demanded much less.

Gradual rise in the wages of the labourers, etc., in Calcutta; its causes; complaint of the native inhabitants; rates fixed.

The employment of a large number of men by the Company in building the new fortifications in Calcutta, and also the engagement of some of them with the Company's Sepoy army, greatly enhanced the demand for labour in that city by the year 1757. Taking advantage of this, the menial servants there began to demand higher wages to the great inconvenience of the Indian inhabitants, who consequently complained "with respect not only to the insolence but exorbitant wages exacted by the menial servants of the settlement." As a remedy for this complaint the rates of monthly wages of the servants were fixed at a

[18] *Consultations*, 8th January, 1753.

[19] *Consultations*, 3rd July, 1753.

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meeting of the quorum of the Zamindars of Calcutta in 1759, Richard Becher, William Frankland and Mr. Holwell being present there.[20] It was decided (A) that if any servant refused to comply with the terms of this settlement then his possessions in lands would be sequestered but if he had no possessions in land, then "on conviction of such refusal, do suffer such fine, imprisonment, or corporal punishment as the Court of Zamindary shall judge meet, and be obliged to serve or quit the settlement," (B) that if any master presumed to exceed the established rate of wages on any pretence whatever, then he " shall be debarred all redress from the Court of Zamindary," (C) that if any servant presumed to " quit his service without one month's warning he shall, on conviction, be liable to fine, imprisonment and corporal punishment at the discretion of the Court of Zamindary," (D) and that any servant ill-treated by his master would be entitled to " redress and releasement from his service on regular complaint made and proved before the quorum of sitting Justices or Court of Zamindary ; provided, nevertheless, that no plea of ill-usage shall be deemed to exculpate any servant quitting his service before regular complaint made of such

[20] *Proceedings*, 21st May, 1759 A.D. Long, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 181-84.

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his ill-usages." [21] According to the fixed scale a *khansama* (Christian, Muhammadan, or Hindu) was to have Rs. 5 a month, a *chabdar* Rs. 5, a a *chief cook* Rs. 5, a *coachman* Rs. 5, a *jamadar* Rs. 4, a *khidmatgar* Rs. 3, a chief *bearer* Rs. 3, a *peon* Rs. 2-8-0, a *washerman* to a family Rs. 3, a *washerman* to a single man Rs. 1-8-0, a *syce* (groom) Rs. 2, a *mussalchi* Rs. 2, a *shaving barber* [22] Rs. 1-8-0, a *wig bearer* Rs. 1-8-0, a *crutchpurdar* (?) Rs. 2, a *mali* (gardener) Rs. 2, a *grass-cutter* Rs. 1-4-0, a *maid-servant* to a family Rs. 2-0-0, a *maid.servant* to a single man Re. 1-0-0, a *wet nurse* Rs. 4-0-0, a *dry nurse* Rs. 4-0-0, a *family tailor* Rs. 3. A family tailor [23] was to attend at seven (from April

[21] One Mr. Johnson was fined for striking one of his servants ; he d d not appear in Court and was, therefore, thrown into jail, and " after rotting in a loathsome jail " for three months, he presented a petition that he was unable to pay the fine or provide the common necessaries of life. His petition was granted. *Proceedings*, 21st March, 1763.

[22] *Ives' Voyage*, p. 53.

[23] " It is also the custom in this part of the world to oblige the taylor to come home, and work at your own house; but on viewing the miserable condition of some of this tradesman's tools, his rusty scissors in particular, and how loosely riveted, you would think it impossible for him ever to cut out a coat with them. It is much the same with his other implements; but *inspite of every inconvenience he labours under, the Indian taylor is so*

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to September) or at eight (from October to March) in the morning "on pain of corporal punishment." These rates so fixed were announced by beat of drums and by notices, written in English, Persian, Bengali, Nagri, being affixed in public places of the city.[24] In 1760 the charges of tailors, washermen and barbers were limited, with regard to the menial servants, according to the following rates:—no tailor was to demand for making a *jama* more than 2 annas and for 1 pair of *drawers* 7 *puns* of *cowries*; no washerman was to demand more than 7 *puns* of *cowries* for 1 corge of pieces and no barber more than 7 *gondas* for shaving a single man.[25] In 1766 it was resolved by the Company's Government in Calcutta to have an office established for keeping a "register of all servants of every denomination in

exact an imitator, that he seldom or ever fails to give any entire satisfaction." Ibid, p. 52.

[24] About thirty years later the rate was:—a *khansama* from 10 to 25 rupees, a *chabdar* 6 to 8 rupees, a *chief cook* 12 to 20 rupees, a *chief female servant* 10 to 16 rupees, a *jamadar* from 8 to 15 rupees, *khidmatgar* from 6 to 10 rupees, a *cook's first mate* 6 to 10 rupees, a *chief bearer* 6 to 10 Rs., a peon 4 to 6 Rs., a *bearer* from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 Rs., a *washerman* to a family from 10 to 20 Rs., a *washerman* to a single man from 4 to 8 Rs., a *syce* from 5 to 6 Rs., a *shaving barber* 2 to 4 Rs., a *grass cutter* 2 to 4 Rs., a *wet nurse* from 12 to 14 Rs., a *dry nurse* from 12 to 14 Rs. Long, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-84.

[25] *Proceedings*, 27th March, 1766 A.D.

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Calcutta." [26] But no definite measures were adopted in pursuance of this resolution. The servants in the mofussil towns demanded lower wages than those in Calcutta because there the demand for labour was not generally so high and prices of articles were comparatively cheap. Sometimes the servants of the native landholders rendered services to their masters on tenure of lands, known as '*cākrān*' lands.[27]

The coolies were ordinarily paid in *cowries*; but occasionally, those engaged along with bricklayers or artizans, received their wages in coins. When in 1753 the Company had to send artificers and coolies to Negrais, a head cooly demanded 7 and other coolies 4 Arcot rupees each for a month.[28] This rate was regarded as rather exorbitant and it was probably so because they were being sent out of their homes to a distant place. In 1755 the families of the coolies sent to Negrais were paid Rs. 5 each in advance.[29] Similarly, the families of the coolies and *mooṭeas* (load-bearers), wounded and killed

Coolies were ordinarily paid in cowries but occasionally in coins also.

[26] *Proceedings*, 20th June, 1766 A.D.

[27] These '*cākrān*' lands were of two kinds—(1) Khñuṭi and (*bekhñuṭi*—those holding *khñuṭi* '*cākrāns*' had to pay rents, while the holders of *bekhñuṭi* '*cākrāns*' held them free of rent. *Kshitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita*, pp. 11-13.

[28] *Consultations*, 3rd July, 1753 A.D.

[29] *Consultations*, 6th January, 1755 A.D.

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during the siege of Chandernagore (March 1757), were rewarded with Rs. 8 or Rs. 10 each.[30] Sometimes, advance payments were made to the coolies themselves, on the security of some man of position and influence. In March 1760, the Council in Calcutta while considering the report of the Committee of Accounts under date, 1st December, 1759, observed that there was a balance of Rs. 7,257-7 due from the coolies formerly employed on works. The Council consequently decided to write to Mr. Howitt, the then Resident in Raja Tilakcand's country (Burdwan), to demand of that Raja the sum of rupees 1,237-10-3 for which he was in security and at the same time to write to the gentlemen at the Cassimbazar factory to demand from one Satubdy Bildar (Sitabdi beldar) the sum of Rs. 2,326-6-3 advanced to him on account of the coolies.[31] We should note here that the Company thus imported coolies from the mofussil places and engaged them in their works in Calcutta.

Abuses of the method of paying in *cowries* :

The method of paying the coolies in cowries began, in course of time, to produce various abuses. The *banians* and the headmen combined to deprive the poor coolies of a part of their pay by

[30] *Proceedings*, 7th April, 1757 A.D. The reward was given for encouraging the coolies to serve the Company on similar occasions in future.

[31] *Proceedings*, 20th March, 1760 A.D.

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taking a small number of *cowries* out of each man's share under the plea of realising what they called *dusturi*. In 1757, the coolies at Fort William were cheated out of their pay by their headmen, who, instead of distributing the *cowries'* shares to the coolies, had themselves misappropriated these jointly with the *banians*.[32] As a protest against this a large number of coolies walked off and complained to the authorities. In order to get rid of these abuses, which day by day grew extremely tedious and obnoxious, Engineer Brohier, while laying out his plan for the construction of a fort at Berhampore in 1757, wrote to Mr. Drake, President and Governor of the Council in Calcutta, proposing that the coolies might be paid in annas (silver or copper) instead of *cowries*.[33]

Brohier's plan to pay in annas instead of *cowries*;

This method of payment in coins was not, however, absolutely free from

Defects of the new plan.

[32] *Proceedings*, 13th June, 1757.

[33] "The payment of the artificiers and coolies in cowries being extremely tedious, it would be necessary absolutely to coin annas either in silver or copper, and to facilitate the exchange of them a shroff or two of the Company's should attend upon the works with cowries for that purpose, who should be forbid gaining anything by that exchange that these people may not be losers on the money they receive for their hire, otherwise it will be such a discouragement as will hinder them from coming to the works." *Brohier's letter* to *Drake*, *Proceedings*, 13th October, 1757 A.D.

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drawbacks. The poor coolies were not exempted from paying *batta* on the Sanat rupees in the bazar ; and by this they sustained heavy losses. On account of this 5,000 men withdrew from their works in Fort William in 1758, and many of them demanded three rupees each per month.[34] In 1760, Mr. Brohier informed the Council in Calcutta about the coolies' and the artificers' complaint that they did not get at the bazar the real value of the copper money they were paid in. He requested the Council that the shroffs and the market-people might be ordered to receive the copper coin for the value they were paid by the Company at their works, and that in the exchange the workmen might receive 54 *puns* of *cowries* for 18 copper annas and the same proportion for the lesser coins.[35] The Council accordingly gave a notice that the copper coins would be received back into the treasury without any loss. In 1760 the Company

[34] *Consultations*, 21st February, 1758 A.D. Colonel Clive wrote on the subject:—" He begs leave to represent in the strongest terms the great stake the Company have in Bengal and how much it is exposed for want of a fortification that it gives him concern beyond what he can express to hear from all hands the works go on very slowly, and if the want of hands arises from the want of a few pice more he thinks such a saving does not merit a moment's consideration, or that such economy can meet with the Company's approbation at this juncture."

[35] *Proceedings*, 15th April, 1760 A.D.

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The Company's regulations for the coolies.

passed the following regulations for the coolies employed in works in the Fort:— "That all coolies, employed in works, were to be divided into hundreds, and a banian was to be appointed to every hundred to take their names, and that the name of every person who did not respond at the 'afternoon's muster' was to be struck off the roll. It was thought necessary to appoint one European to every thousand consisting either of brick-layers, builders and coolies, as a sort of check on the power of the banians. It was settled that instead of numbers of *dafadars* being kept at a great expense, there were to be appointed only six; they were to provide at any time six hundred builders who were thought to be sufficient for six thousand coolies allowing 2,000 to be employed in serving the brick-layers with materials. Each of these *dafadars* was to have a *sarkar* for keeping his accounts. One of the sub-engineers was to attend constantly the musters, to receive all the returns and to make a general return of the whole including the daily disposition of all the people on the works. Payments were to be made daily and no deduction was to be made in the exchange of copper money into rupees, or such copper money has to be taken according to the value fixed on it at a bazar set up in the Fort for the convenience of those who choose to reside there, which doubtless would be many who came from a great

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distance, when sheds were erected there for them." Any person "failing or neglecting to produce at the evening muster, his basket or any other thing delivered him to work with in the morning, was to be deprived of his day's pay. Sepoy sentries were to be placed over all the stores, etc., and one sepoy at every salient angle of the glacis, or that in proportion all on the land side of the fort, to prevent a single black fellow to come in or go out of the fort between the time of mustering without a pass," and these sepoys were to take up any person who was seen carrying away either planks, bamboos, rope, *kodālis*, baskets or any other kind of stores, implements, etc.[36]

Though labour was ordinarily paid, yet in exceptional circumstances the zamindars compelled the poor ryots to work for them without any remuneration.[37] In the Proceedings, dated 10th March, 1760, we find that the collector was ordered to send peons into the paraganas and to bring up by force 8,000 coolies, because the works in the Fort were being much retarded for want of coolies, and the farmers were not complying with their

[36] Proceedings, 25th April, 1760 A.D.

[37] "The poor ryot also is forced to labour for his lordly master without any reward, while perhaps his own farm at the same time remains uncultivated." Verelst, *View of Bengal*, p. 7.

"The Kotwāl passed his orders for digging the hole and a large number of people were pressed into the work without any reward." Rāmaprasāda, p. 31, B. E.

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agreement. The coolies hired for carrying on bag and baggage during one's travel were generally laborious fellows, capable of bearing extreme fatigue. It is noted in the list of the travelling expenses (in 1763) of the Company's Governor that he paid Rs. 5 per month to each of the 400 coolies that he had then engaged. [38] Ives makes the following remarks about such coolies :—"To cooleys or servants whom you hire for this purpose, you pay so much by the day, and they find themselves in victuals. Their chief food is rice and their drink toddy (*tāri*) both of which are easily to be procured in any part of the country and at a reasonable price. The coolies are very extraordinary fellows for bearing fatigue; and are very impatient either of hunger or thirst. Their common rate of travelling is four miles an hour and I have known them walk four and twenty hours without once breaking their fast." [39]

In 1757 the Council in Calcutta devised the plan that "all weavers, carpenters, Bricklayers, Smiths, Taylors, Braziers, etc., Hand-craftsmen shall be incorporated into their respective bodies one in each district of the town, each body to elect a 'Chowdree' or head person to represent them, the Mundells (mandals) of every district to deliver in an account monthly to the Jemindar of every

[38] Proceedings, 14th March, 1763 A. D.

[39] Ives' *Voyage*, p. 68.

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artificier residing within his limits, as well tenants as lodgers and sojourners, and shall make a report immediately to the Jemindar of any stranger of importance coming within his district and the place or house of his abode, and of any new ryots or inhabitants, as also of any persons removing from their place of habitation (without) outside his district and every person's name under their respective bodies shall be entered in the Jemindar's books, the Chowdree of every respective body shall lay before the Jemindar the just and true rates of all kinds of labours and work, what the labourer shall be allowed per day, and the artificier be paid for his work in every branch of his trade, those rates to be laid by the Jemindar before the Governor and Council and to be regulated by them and entered in the Jemindar's books. Every artificier shall take out a license from the Jemindar for the free use of his trade within the Company's limits, who shall pay one quarter of a month's wages for his license, which shall continue in force one whole year and no longer, and in case any person shall be found exercising his trade or employment without license he shall be fined a month's pay or if an artificier, at the discretion of the 'aridge duckle.' The Mundells of each district shall bring an account to the Jemindar of the several 'duncandars' (shop-keepers) within his district of all sorts and all kinds whatever, each ranked under their respective denomination, and the Jemindar is to

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lay this report before the Governor in Council, who will order them licenses under such restrictions as they shall think proper. The Jemindar shall keep books where every farm, their several duties, ground-rent collected and every charge shall be minutely inserted, which accounts shall be delivered to the Board monthly, and he shall deliver to the Board a set of books of his transactions to be transmitted annually to the Company."[40] This shows an attempt to put the mechanics and the artisans under a definite and coherent organisation similar to those which prevailed in the village communities of Bengal. In the villages there was always a body of artisans, of carpenters, and of handicrafts, etc., who were servants to the village community.[41]

Slavery.

It is proved by certain contemporary documents that various types of slavery were prevalent in Bengal in that age. We find instances of a poor man selling himself in perpetual bondage to a rich man of his village, of one selling his children or of one selling his servant to another in lieu of a certain amount. A Bengali document, dated 1125 B.S. (1729 A.D.) states that a woman, whose husband's name was Bodāi and who was an inhabitant of paragana Beṅgāduvā in sarkar Mājkurā, transferred,

Types of slavery.

40 Proceedings, 7th April, 1757 A. D.

41 Gadgil, *Industrial Evolution of India*, pp. 11-12.

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for a long period, her daughter of 11 years to the service of one named Śaṅkara Dāsa of paragana Vejoḍā for Rs. 3 only.[42] It was arranged that she would serve her master till her 70th year, and if she wanted to get herself free during that period, then she would have to pay 10 maunds of copper. In 1126 B.S. (1730 A.D.) one Pārvatī Dāsī, an inhabitant of Maṅgalpurā in paragana Kāchimanagara of sarkar Mājkurā, being subject to extreme poverty and failing to provide her subsistence, sold for ever her daughter of the age of six to one named Rāmanātha Deva of paragana Vejoḍā in the sarkar Śrīhaṭṭa (Sylhet) in return for Rs. 3 only. The deed of sale further conferred on the latter and his descendants the right of selling the children that the girl would bear during her stay in their house.[43] A document was executed on the 16th of Falgun 1125 B.S. (1729 A.D.) to the effect that one Mucirāma Caṅga sold himself for ever, with his wife and children, to one Jayakṛṣṇa Guha for Rs. 11 only, on the condition that his descendents would be likewise bound to serve his master's descendants for all generations to come.[44] It is mentioned in a similar document, dated the 25th of Falgun, 1166 B.S. (1760 A.D.), that one Vasivāra Sudra sold himself for ever, with

42 S. R. Mitra, *Types of Early Bengali Prose*, p. 87.

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid*, p. 8 ; *Navyabhārata*, 1327 B.S., pp. 181-83.

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his wife, children and sister, to one Sobhārāma Guha for Rs. 21 only ;[45] the latter also got the power of selling or transferring his slaves to some one else. Similarly in the year 1177 B.S. (1771 A.D.), the year following the great famine, a woman named Cāru Bewā sold herself to one Lālā Gurudāsa Rāya for her maintenance only, with the condition that he could punish her properly, if she ever attempted to escape. These practices continued to exist in the society for a long time, at least up to the middle of the 19th century. A document, dated *1212 B.S. (1806)*, states that one Ratnavallabha Śarmā sold a daughter of a servant of his father to one Rāghavendra Cakravarti for Rs. 3 only with the conditions that the latter could marry her to a son of a servant of his father and could sell or transfer their children in any way he liked.[46]

[45] *Types of Early Bengali Prose*, p. 17; *Bhāratavarṣa*, First year, No. 3, p. 403.

[46] *Types of Early Bengali Prose*, p. 101; *Śrīhaṭṭera Itivṛtta*, Vol. 2, Part II, p. 91. In the "*Vasumatī*" of *Agrahāyaṇa*, 1332 B.S., pp. 233-34, Babu Surendramohana Bhaṭṭācārya published a khasḍā (draft) of an old document, dated *1231 B.S.* (1825 A.D.), which proves that in those parts of Dacca known as Vikramapura and Maheswardi, servants were then transferred from one hand to another along with properties. The purport of the dcoument is as follows:—"One Śivaprasāda Śarmā was giving up a property belonging to his grandson, to one named Rājamādhava Śarmā with the object that his parents might

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Position of the Bengal slaves.

The actual position of those slaves in the society of Bengal was better than that of the slaves of ancient Greece or of the present-day child slaves in Colombo. [47] The treatment meted out to the former was somewhat similar to that

enjoy bliss in heaven. He had consulted the Śāstras and the Brahmins for this and transferred along with the property, the servants and the slaves attached to it." Śivaprasāda Śarmā was an inhabitant of the village Fursail in paragana Vikramapura of Dacca. A part of this village has been destroyed by the course of the river Dhaleswari.

[47] *The Statesman*, March 29, 1929. The speech of Mr. H. F. Newnham, Mayor of Colombo, and President of the Colombo Friend-in-need Society, at the annual meeting of the Society on 27th March, 1929:—"It is known that small children are obtained from the villages in consideration of monetary payment. Their parents and these children are taken far from their homes and used as domestic servants in return for the mere provision of food and clothing. Undoubtedly the majority are well treated ; but in the last year there have been 13 cases brought to the courts in which children have been grossly and cruelly ill-treated by those who have no excuse whatever for such brutality. The average age of these suffering children was eight years.

Six were burnt with firebrands and three with other heated substances. One child of 10, suspected of theft by her employer, was beaten until the cane broke. She was then burnt with heated oil and the sores rubbed with a substance causing severe irritation to the skin. Finally a nest of red ants was let loose on the child's body."

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which the menial servants received at the hands of their master. In fact, the difference between the slaves and the menial servants lay in the relations which they respectively bore to their masters. The former were generally in perpetual or long-lasting servitude, while the latter could leave their masters' houses much at their own discretion. The Bengal slaves were allowed to marry and to have families of their own.[48] We do not meet with any instance of a slave being subject to an inhuman treatment or of his being compelled to undertake unnatural and extra-ordinary duties. Female slaves were generally employed in such works as fetching water, threshing paddy grains, etc.[49] There is also no instance of forced slavery; in all cases we find the slaves selling themselves and their children voluntarily owing to their inability to earn their bread in critical times.[50] It

48 (*a*) "Marry her to Kaṭāśudra, son of Sunaśudra, a servant of your father. You will become the rightful owner of the children that she will bear." *Types of Early Bengali Prose*, p. 101.

(*b*) "You and your descendants will have the right to sell or transfer the children belonging to her and to her family." *Ibid*, p. 87.

49 "Being provided with necessary food and clothings, she will do such works as fetching water, threshing paddy-grains, etc." *Ibid.*

50 "Suffering from want of food and being unable to make two ends meet, I, out of my own free will, sell to you my daughter Śrī Maṇidāsī of six years age by taking from you Rs. 3 (three rupees only) in full weight." *Ibid.*

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was indeed pathetic that a man bartered himself away along with his family for Rs. 11 or Rs. 6 or Rs. 3 only or simply for food and clothing ; but this state of subjection to which he voluntarily threw himself mitigated to some extent the stings of his cruel destiny by protecting him from starvation.[51]

Abyssinian slaves in Bengal.

Besides such native slaves, Abyssinian slaves[52] were sometimes employed by the rich men in their services. It is noted in the list of expenses incurred by the Company for the entertainment of the Bengal Nawab in 1759 A.D. that the former spent Rs. 500 in purchasing a *Coffre* boy.[53] These Coffre boys were employed later on also. Busteed has noted that, in the newspapers of 1781, " many advertisements occur as to the disposal by sale of Coffrees. One is offered for 400 rupees who understands the business of butler and cook. Some seem to be valued for their musical skill and dexterity in shaving and waiting at table. There is an advertisement also for three handsome African ladies of the true sable hue commonly called *Coffreesses* between fourteen and twenty-five for marriage with three of their countrymen...

[51] " I sell myself to you, Sir ; please supply me with subsistence and enroll me in your service." *Ibid*, pp. 89-90.

[52] " The Hāvesī (Abyssinian) slaves for moving *chowries* on both sides." Rāmaprasāda, p. 6 (B.E.).

[53] Long, *op. cit.*, p. 194, footnote.

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In all probability it means this, that there were Englishmen in Calcutta little more than a hundred years ago who not only bought and sold African slaves but went in for the breeding of them for the slave market." [54]

Traffic in slaves by the European Companies, the Portuguese and the Mugs.

During the 18th century, the European Companies in Bengal, the Portuguese and the Mugs of Arracan carried on a regular traffic in slaves. In 1721 A. D. an Armenian merchant named Coja Daniel, ordinarily a resident of Chinsurah, renounced all rights in his slave girl Marie.[55] In April 1728, one Lwrens Argans sold for Rs. 51 (Madras) a slave girl named Murielle (Murali), aged about 19 years, to M. De la Blanchetiere, Director General for the Company of France.[56] In a list of personal effects, both movable and immovable, prepared by one Felieienne Cabate in course of her marriage contract with one John Basspool, the former mentioned 18 slaves, mostly females whose age varied from 8 to 35 years.[57]

Calcutta, a slave-market at that time.

The City of Calcutta was itself a slave market at that time. Among the items of the

54 *Echoes from Old Calcutta*, 4th Edn., p. 136, footnote.

55 *Bengal: Past and Present*, 1910, pp. 261-64.

56 *Ibid.*

57 *Ibid.*

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Company's revenue for April 1752, one item is 'sale of slaves.'[58] The Portuguese and the Mugs propagated the practice of slavery and bands of Portuguese and Mug pirates gathered in the Sunderbuns and frequently haunted the neighbourhood of Akra, Budge Budge and Calcutta.[59] We read the following account in the East India Chronicle :—" February, 1717, the Mugs carried off from the most southern parts of Bengal, 1,800 men, women and children ; in ten days they arrived at Arrakan, and were conducted before the sovereign, who chose the handicraftsmen, about one-fourth of the number, as his slaves. The remainder were returned to the captors, with ropes about their necks, to market and sold, according to their strength, from 20 to 70 Rs. each. They were by their purchasers sent to cultivate the land, and 15 seers of rice each, allowed for their monthly support. Soon after this the Sovereign, Duppung Geree, was deposed by his Cutwal, Kuddul Poree ; 25 men and women of the captives took advantage of the disturbances, fled, and arrived at Chittagong in the following June. Almost three-fourths of the inhabitants of Arrakan are said to be natives of Bengal, or descendants of such, who pray that the English

[58] *Consultations*, 9th October, 1752 ; Long, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

[59] *Bengal: Past and Present*, Vol. II, p. 271.

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may deliver them, and they have agreed among themselves to assist their deliverers. From time immemorial, the Mugs have plundered the southern parts of Bengal, and have even been so hostile as to descend on the coast of Chittagong, and proceed into the country, plunder and burn the villages, destroy what they could not carry away, and carry the inhabitants into slavery. But since the cession of the province to the Company, the place for the most part has enjoyed quiet." [60] In Bihar 'numbers of boys of tender age were brought' by dealers, and mutilated so as to grow up as suitable servants for the harems of rich lords, and little girls were disposed of to evil characters, to be brought up to lives of shame and vice." [61] Sometimes, the Company's people in Bengal imported slaves from foreign countries. In 1759 some of the Armenian inhabitants of Calcutta made a petition to Lord Clive against Captain Lang, who had brought an Armenian girl as a slave from the Persian Gulf and was unwilling to give her back to them inspite of their repeated requests. The petitioners wrote that "never such an instance was known since the settlement of this place by the English, nor the Armenian nation so much disgraced by having either of their males or females made

Slaves imported from foreign countries by the Company's people.

[60] Quoted in *ibid.* [61] *Ibid.*

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slaves." [62] About that time the Company's Government in Calcutta was investigating into a charge brought against one Lieutenant Perry for unlawfully buying an Armenian girl and taking her to Patna.[63] In 1761, when an expedition was directed to Mauritius and Bourbon, the expeditionists were orderd to procure there as many slaves as possible.[64]

Slavery did not disappear when the Company's rule was established, but became widespread towards the latter half of the 18th century and continued to exist later on.[65] Compared with the position of the slaves employed by the Hindu families,[66] the condition of the slaves in European and Anglo-Indian families was miserable. A modern writer has quoted the following from an eighteenth century source: "slave girls,[66a] for the slightest offence, and on the most trivial occasions, receive corporal punishment, entirely at the will and pleasure of their owners and I know many instances where punishments have been inflicted in a greater degree and by a more severe method than the criminal receives, who has offended the laws of his country." [67]

62 Proceedings, 22nd October 1759.

63 Long, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

64 Select Committee's Proceedings, 28th December, 1761.

65 *Bengal: Past and Present*, Vol. II, pp. 272-73.

66 *Vide ante.*

66a Evidently in European and Anglo-Indian families.

67 *Bengal: Past and Present*, Vol. II, p. 274.

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APPENDIX A.

INVESTMENTS.

(1) January and February, 1742 :—

(*a*) "Now send the Marlborough having laden the amount of current rupees 59,640. Also 143 bags Cowries shot loose on half freight.[1] Supplied St. Helena with stores amount current rupees 979-4-3.[2] Have Loaden 260 tons saltpetre on the Marlborough.[3] Shall put 260 tons also on the Shaftesbury to enable them to Dispatch her so soon as in February as not to hazard her passage.[4] Princess Augusta refited and is now loading with saltpetre for Madras and shall send more on the Company's sloop.[5] Send some samples of New Sortments of goods from Cossimbazar and Dacca and in a bundle delivered to Captain Smith's particular care.[6] Send a Bale of the lowest priced Gurrahs. ....."

(*b*) On Shaftesbury have loaden to the amount of current Rupees 5,60,000.[7] Also 195 bags Turmerick at half freight.[8] And sundry stores for St.

[1] Letter to Court, 30th January, 1742, paras. 2 and 4.
[2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid*, para. 9. [4] *Ibid*, para. 10,
[5] *Ibid*, para. 11, [6] *Ibid*, para. 12.
[7] Letter to Court, 15th February, 1742, para. 3.
[8] *Ibid*, para. 4.

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Helena amount Rs. 1,106-4-9.[9] Have laden on the Princess Augusta 2,300 Bags saltpetre for Madras shall send per sloops 1,400 bags more.[10] Send another bale of new goods from Cossimbazar and Dacca.[11] Now send another Bale of the lowest priced Gurrahs." [12]

(2) At the beginning of the next year (1743) :—

(*a*) "The Company's ship Augusta..... Dispached back to Madras with some Sannoes, 2600, Bags rice, she returned 14th October, and was sent again with Sannoes, 2,500 Bags Rice, 25 Jars oyl (oil) and 4,000 Gunny ;[13] " (*b*) "On 21st February sent the Port Bello and Bombay sloops to Madras with 140 Bales and 1,500 Bags saltpetre,"[14] (*c*) "On 2nd instant (January) dispatched Fort George for Surat consigned first to Bombay with freight to the amount of Rupees 20,779-14-3, 2,108 Bags sugar, 431 Bags Ginger, 200 Bags rice, and 2,000 Maunds copper it yielding 46 rupees a maund at Bombay, and the Bengal market over-burthened, put on her also 600 Bags Refined saltpetre, and 20 Maund oyl (oil) ;"[15] (*d*) "Now Dispatch the Princess Amelia to England having Loaden 9,08,500 rupees, also ten

[9] *Ibid*, para. 5.
[10] *Ibid*, para. 8.
[11] *Ibid*, para. 9.
[12] *Ibid*, para. 11.
[13] Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 10.
[14] *Ibid*, para. 11.
[15] *Ibid*, para. 19.

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Tons Turmerick 25 Tons Cowries and 30 Tons saltpetre at half Freight,"[16] (*e*) "And stores for St. Helena with 5 Tons rice Extra-ordinary,"[17] (*f*) "Have loaden on the Exeter to the amount of Rupees 64,87,000; Twenty tons Cowries goes on..."

(3) End of the year 1743 and the beginning of 1744 :—

(*a*) "This comes by the Duke have loaded on her Rupees 5,95,800, 25 Tons cowries and 68 tons 13 cwt. saltpetre at half freight and for St. Helena Rupees 790-5-6. Filled up her Tonnage with rice for Madras....."[18] (*b*) "This comes per Mont fort have loaden on her Rs.6,15,400, 25 tons cowries and 1,000 Bags saltpetre at half freight. And for St. Helena Rupees 790-5-6 compleated her Tonnage with Rice for Madras ;"[19] (*c*) "Have loaden on the Heathcote Rupees 6,37,540 also 2,400 Bags saltpetre, the Captain refused cowries.....And for St. Helena Rs. 750-2-6"[20]; (*d*) "Sent to St. Helena one hundred Blue Doosooties";[21] (*e*) "On the 14th instant (February, 1744) ship princess Augusta dispatched to Fort St. George with what saltpetre and stores the Captain said

[16] *Ibid*, para. 23. [17] *Ibid*, para. 24.

[18] Letter to Court, 14th December, 1743, para. 17.

[19] *Ibid*, 14th December, 1743, paras. 4-7.

[20] *Ibid*, 27th December, 1743, paras. 6-8.

[21] *Ibid*, 9th February, 1744, para. 132.

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he could take in....." ;[22] (*f*) "Have loaden on Godolphin Goods to the amount of Rupees 8,73,500," "40 tons saltpetre requested by the Captain," "10 tons Turmerick," "stores for St. Helena Rupees 732-11-9."[23]

(4) End of 1744 and beginning of 1745 :—

"Now dispatch the ships St. George and Winchester to Tellicherry with Red Wood, saltpetre and cowries. "Montagu was dispatcht from Ingellee 14th November last, send 86 ton. 13 cwt. saltpetre on those ships to Tellicherry, Prince William follows in a few days.

"Loaden on Beaufort current Rupees 3,02,000 also 40 tons saltpetre at the low freight requested for by Captain Stevens.

"Laden on Durrington current Rupees 3,04,600 also 50 tons saltpetre requested.[24]

"Lapwing left Ingellee 5th December with 50 tons saltpetre 10 tons Red wood and stores.

"Now dispatch Winchelsea Invoice Rupees 11,43,000.....£1,42,875.

"And Duke of Dorsett Invoice Rupees 10,05,000 ...£1,25,625.

[22] *Ibid*, 20th February, 1744, para. 7.

[23] *Ibid*, paras. 10, 11, 12.

[24] Letter to Court, 7th December 1744, paras. 1-2 and 31st December, 1744, paras. 1-4.

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"And at half freight on Winchester 18 ton cowries and 50 tons saltpetre. Turmerick refused by both captains.

"Stores for St. Helena on Winchelsea 1,009-8-6 Duke of Dorset 1,236-9-0." [25]

(5) Towards the close of 1745 and the beginning of 1746 :—

"Have loaden per Scarborough Rs. 9,51,900.

Also 585 bags of saltpetre and 12 bags cowries at the low freight.

And for St. Helena current Rupees 794-2-9.

On the Royal George have Loaden rupees 9,30,500.

Also 456 bales saltpetre at Low Freight.

For St. Helena stores 820-10.

Sent 5 planks per each sawed in half.

The captains refused surplus Rice for St. Helena." [26]

[25] *Ibid*, dated 9th February, 1745, paras. 12, 20, 27-31.

[26] Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1746, paras. 33-41.

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APPENDIX B.

The East India Company's Trade.

"1. To the first, *viz.*, whether the Firman granted a right to trade in all articles custom free?

In the affirmative.....Ten voices.
In the negative, with respect to the inland trade.....Two.

2. To the second, *viz.*, whether any customs should be paid on some articles ?

In the affirmative.....Seven.
In the negative.....Five.

3. To the third, *viz.*, whether the Company's Dustuck should be granted for inland trade?

In the affirmative.....Nine.
In the negative.....Two.

Major Adams, silent.

4. The fourth question, being altered by the determination of the second, stands thus :—

As it is determined, that duties shall be allowed on certain articles, whether certificates shall be granted to those who pay that duty, but are not

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Company's servants? and it being accordingly put, the sum of the opinions stands as follow:—

In the affirmative. Messrs. Hay, Cartier, Amyat and the President.—Four voices.

In the negative. Messrs. Watts, Marriot, Johnstone, Hastings, Billers and Batson.—Six voices.

Majors Carnac and Adams, silent.

5. To the fifth and sixth questions, *viz.*, whether the English Gomasthas should be subject to the control of the officers of the Government? and how disputes between them should be settled? The opinion of all the Board, excepting Mr. Hastings, imports, that the English Gomasthas shall not be under any actual control of the officers of the country government, but be restrained by such regulations as may be laid down."

(*Consultations*, 1st March, 1763.)

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APPENDIX C.

Prices of Articles.

(I) " The import warehouse-keeper delivers in his account of goods sold by retail in August. Particulars, *viz.* :—

	Y.	C. Rs.	As.	P.
Broad cloth, fine.	44-2	275	6	0
Do. do. ordinary	10-8	23	10	0
Perpets, ordinary	1-4	1	1	6
White flannel	11	12	6	0
Allapeen	9-8	19	0	0
Velvets	8	77	4	9
Broad cloth, fine in pieces	48 pieces	3,933	0	0
Do. do. ordinary yellow	24	1,200	0	0
Perpets, fine scarlet	31	868	0	0
Do. ordinary green	1	19	0	0
	Total	6,428	12	3 "

(*Consultations*, 25th September, 1752.)

(II) Broad cloth by retail	98-8	681	11	0
Ditto aurara by retail	5-12	19	6	4
Ditto ordinary do.	38-8	88	14	0

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	Yds.	C. Rs.	As	P.
Velvets by retail	11-14	99	13	0
Tricre do.	3-0	6	12	0
Brocade do.	3-12	84	6	0
Perpets, Broad	21-14	27	5	6
Scarlet dussil	12-0	60	0	0
Perpets, ordinary	4-1	3	8	8
Allapeen	15-0	30	0	0
Flannell	23-4	26	2	6
Duroys in PS. 4		34	0	0
Broad cloth, fine, in PS. 16		1,242	11	9
Do. ordinary, in PS. 18		866	15	6
Perpets, ordinary in P. I.		19	0	0
		3,290	9	9"

(*Consultations*, 18th January, 1753.)

"Broad-cloth, fine, by retail	70-12	575	2	0
Broad-cloth, ordinary	5-8	12	6	0
Velvets	150-14	1,300	11	9
Brocade	0-8	20	0	0
Broad Perpets, fine	8-0	16	0	0
Broad ditto, ordinary	37-0	46	4	0
Flannel, by retail	17-10	20	5	3
Frieze	2-8	5	10	

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(IV)	Yds. Hands.	C. Rs.	As.	P.
Perpets, fine	12-0	18	0	0
Duroys, 3 Prs.		48	0	0
Carpets, I		65	0	0
Broad cloth, fine, 4 prs.		254	8	0
		2,381	15	0 "

(*Fort William Consultations*, 5th Feb., 1753.)

" Broad-cloth, fine	22. 8.	166	3	6
Ditto ordinary	6	13	8	0
Allapeen	7	14	0	0
White flannel	3.	3	6	0
Velvet	40.	348	7	6
Broad-cloth super-fine	55 pieces	5,197	8	0
Ditto ordinary	5 do.	250	0	0
Broad perfect, fine	1 do.	50	0	0
Perpets, fine cloth	4 do.	334	0	0
Flannel shawls	3 do.	25	8	0
Carpets, small	9 do.	90	0	0
		C. Rs. 6,632	8	6 "

(*Fort William Consultations*, 30th October, 1752.)

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1. Contemporary Bengali Literature.

(A) Bhāratacandra's *Granthāvalī*.—Bhāratacandra occupies an important place in the history of Bengali Literature and his works are full of many valuable incidental references regarding the social, economic and political conditions of Bengal during the mid-eighteenth century. He was born about the year 1712 A.D. in the village called Pũeḍo-Vasantapur in the Hugli district and died in 1760 A.D.; thus he is a contemporary authority for our period. He was well-read in Sanskrit and Persian and was for several years the court-poet of Mahārājā Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā on a monthly allowance of Rs. 40 ; and thus being connected with court-circles he was acquainted with many contemporary political movements also.

(B) Rāmaprasāda Sena's *Granthāvalī*.—Like Bhāratacandra, Rāmaprasāda was a contemporary Bengali poet; he was born somewhere between 1718 and 1723, in the village Kumārhaṭṭa near Halisahar and died in 1775 A.D. In his writings also we find valuable incidental references to the facts of contemporary social and economic life. He was acquainted with Mahārāja Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā and with several other rich men living near about Calcutta, but being rather of a

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religious turn of mind he did not care much about worldly prosperity.

(C) *Tīrthamaṅgala* by Vijayarāma Sena-Viśārada. It is a contemporary book of travels in Bengali of much historical value. We know from internal evidences in the book that it was completed in 1177 B.S. (1770 A.D.). A MS. copy written by the author himself four months after its completion has been edited by Srijut Nagendranath Vasu and published by the Vaṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣad, Calcutta. The author Vijayarāma joined Kṛṣṇacandra Ghoṣāla on a pilgrimage in the year 1769 to the holy places of Northern India and he has given very valuable descriptions regarding the routes followed and the places visited by them. The descriptions being accurate are of much importance for a student of history. Kṛṣṇacandra Ghoṣāla was the elder brother of Gokulacandra Ghoṣāla, who was the Company's dewan from 27th January, 1767, to 26th December, 1769.

(D) Rāmeśvara's *Śivāyana*, written about 1750 A.D. Here also we find important references to the facts of social and economic history of the time. The writer lived under the patronage of Rājā Yaśovanta Singh of Karṇagaḍa in Midnapur in a village named Ayodhyābarh, in the same area.

(E) *Harilīlā* by Jayanārāyaṇa Sena. Jayanārāyaṇa was a poet of East Bengal, being

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a relative of Rājā Rājballabh of Dacca, and he was a contemporary of Bhāratacandra and Rāmaprasāda Sena. He composed 'Harilīlā' in collaboration with his niece Ānandamayī in the year 1772. This work being an important literary production of Bengal during the mid-eighteenth century contains many valuable information about contemporary conditions of life in the country. It has been recently published by the University of Calcutta.

(F) Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa by Gaṅgārāma (published in the Vaṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣad Patrikā, 1313 B.S., Part IV). It is a highly valuable piece of historical writing, the surviving manuscript of which was completed on Saturday, 14th Pouṣ, 1158 B.S. (December, 1751 A.D.). Gaṅgārāma was an eye-witness of the Maratha ravages in Bengal; he supplies us with many valuable details ragarding these.

(G) *Samasera Gājira Pñuthi.*—Samasera Gāji was a contemporary of Nawab Allahvardi of Bengal. The writer of this tract was Gāji's friend and he refers carefully in his work to many contemporary historical facts. This work was published sometime ago in Chittagong.

(H) *Bhavāṇīmaṅgala* by Gaṅgānārāyaṇa. An important Bengali manuscript of mid-eighteenth century containing references to contemporary social life. It has been preserved in the Ratan Library, Suri, Birbhum.

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(I) *Bṛhatsārāvalī* by Rādhāmādhava Ghoṣa, written during the middle of the eighteenth century. It is a voluminous work having five parts. Srijut Sivaratan Mitra, the famous litterateur of Birbhum, has in his library a copy of it, which I could utilise. The author was an inhabitant of the village named Dasgharā in the Bankura District, and he refers in his work to many facts of contemporary social life.

(J) Songs of Rāmanidhi Rāya (1741-1834), popularly known as '*Nidubābu's ṭappa*,' and also songs of the *Kaviwālās* like Haru Thākur (1738-1813), Nityānanda Vairāgī (1751-1821) and others, incidentally refer to certain features of contemporary society.

(K) Extracts from certain contemporary works, such as '*Devīsiṁhera Utpīḍana*'; '*Candrakānta*'; Ānandamayī's "*Umāra Vivāha*"; Jayanātha Ghoṣa's *Rājopākhyāna*; 'Dvija Kālidāsa's *Kālikāmaṅgala*'; Kavijivana Maitra's '*Śivāyana*'; Narasiṁha Vasu's *Dharmamaṅgala*; Adbhutācārya's *Rāmāyaṇa*; Dvija Bhavāṇi's *Rāmāyaṇa*, etc., in Dr. D. C. Sen's *Typical Selections from Old Bengali Literature*, Parts I and II.

(L) S. R. Mitra's *Types of Early Bengali Prose* (published by the University of Calcutta). It is a collection of old prose writings in Bengali, some of which are of much historical value.

2. Persian Sources.

(A) *Seir-ul-mutakherin*. A highly important

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history of India from 1707 to 1780 with a detailed account of the affairs in the Bengal Subah from 1738 to 1780 A.D. The author Gulam Husain Tabatab'ai belonged to a distinguished family of Bengal; his grandfather, Sayyid Alimullah, and his father Hedayet Ali Khan Bahadur Asad Jang, held high offices in the Muslim government (imperial as well as provincial). He himself took part in the political affairs and military campaigns of the time, served as a representative of Nawab Mir Kasim with the Company in Calcutta and was later on engaged under the Company in various capacities (*vide* Asiatic Annual Register for 1801 pp. 26-27). He was a man of good education and was thoroughly acquainted with the history of his time. An English translation of this work by a French renegade to Islam, Haji Mustafa, was published in Calcutta in 1789.

(B) *Muzaffarnamah.* A detailed history of the Bengal Subah from the time of Nawab Allahvardi to 1772 A.D. when Muhammad Reza Khan, also known as Muzaffar Jang, was deposed by the English. The author Karam Ali states in the preface that he belonged to the family of the Nawabs of Bengal. He was employed under Muzaffar Jang; he notes that he wrote the present work in 1186 A.H.=1772 A.D. in order to remove his grief due to the fate of his patron to whom he dedicated it and after whom it was named. A copy of this manuscript is noticed in

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Rieu, Vol. I, p. 313, one in India Office Library Catalogue, No. 47, and another in the Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. I have utilised the copy preserved in the Oriental Public Library, Patna.

(C) *Ryaz-us-salatin*, written in 1786-87 by Gulam Husain Salim of Maldah at the request of Mr. George Udni who had employed him as his Munshi. It is something like a compilation and is therefore less valuable than the two independent histories noted above. An English translation of this work has been published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

(D) *Tarikh-i-Bangala* by Sālimullah. This is a history of Bengal from 1107 A.H. to the death of Allahvardi Khan (1169 A.H.). The author states that he wrote this work by order of Henry Vansittart, Governor of Bengal from 1760-1764 (*vide* Rieu, Vol. I, p. 312). An incomplete and rather incorrect translation of it was published (1788 A. D.) by Francis Gladwin in Calcutta under the title of 'A Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal.' A copy of this manuscript is preserved in the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

(E) *Khulāṣat-ut-Tawārikh* by Kalyan Singh. The second *bab* (part) of this work contains a detailed account of the events of Bengal from the accession of Mir Kasim to the nawabship of Bengal (1760) till the time of the author's deposition from the Deputy-Governorship of Bihar (1783 A.D.).

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The work though completed in 1227 A.H. = 1812 A.D. is valuable in the sense that the author's father Shitab Ray was Deputy-Governor of Bihar (1765-1770) and the author himself took active parts in many of the political events of the time. A copy of this manuscript is preserved in the Oriental Public Library, Patna ; *vide* also Rieu, Vol. I, p. 313.

(F) *Waqai-i-Fath Bangala* or *Waqai-i-Mahabat Jang* by Muhammad Wafa. Manuscript No. 1776 in the Oriental Public Library, Patna. A very important and interesting work, which gives an account of the events which took place immediately before and after the accession of Mahabat Jang Allahvardi to the throne of Bengal brought down to 1161 A.H. = 1748 A.D. From internal evidences in the book we gather that the author, a panegyrist of Allahvardi, dedicated the work to him. The State Library of His Highness the Nawab of Rampur contains a copy of this work and we have got a transcript of it through the kindness of His Highness the Chief Minister of that State.

(F 1) Ahwal-i-Ali-Wirdi-Khan (as mentioned in ' Descriptive Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts' published by A. S. B., Bibliotheca India Work No. 248) or Tirikhi Mahabat Jang (British Museum Additional MS. No. 27316, Rieu, Vol. I, pp. 311-12). This work gives a very valuable and detailed description about the history of the

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Bengal Subah during the mid-eighteenth century, especially about the administration of Allahvardi. I have consulted a copy of it preserved in the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal ; this copy is rather defective as it lacks the first and the last few pages. The name of the author has not been disclosed anywhere in the book ; but it is clear from his personal references in several places (f. 8 ; f. 12 of our copy) that he was connected with the political affairs of Bengal since the time of Sarfaraz Khan. He writes in one place (f. 42) that he had to suspend the work of completing (first 4 folios had been apparently written before) this book till 1177 A.H. (1763 A.D.). He accompanied Mir Kasim to Allahabad where his father died and he himself fell ill ; but he resumed the work of writing out the remaining portion during the third quarter of the month of Shaban 1177 A.H. when it was completed. The author is modest enough to crave the indulgence of the reader for inaccuracies or exaggerations. Mr. J. Hindley has ascribed the authorship of the work to Yusuf Ali Khan (*a*), son of Gulam Ali Khan, an intimate friend of Mahabat Jang Allahvardi ; there are of course strong grounds in favour of this opinion. Gulam Husain, the author of the *Seir-ul-mutakherin*, writes that (*b*) he describes the

(*a*) Rieu, Vol. I, pp. 311-12.

(*b*) Vol. I, pp. 388 (English Translation, Cambay Edn.)

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sufferings of the Nawab's troops in their journey from Burdwan to Katwah on the authority of a contemporary memoir writer, Yusuf Ali Khán. It is found that the description that Gulam Husain has included in his work is exactly similar to that given in this manuscript (fs. 34-35). Further, this work seems to have been the principal authority of Gulam Husain for his account of the Maratha invasions of Bengal and also of the Afghan rebellions. The author gives us many new facts and dates as well which are not mentioned by any other contemporary writer. Late Sir H. Elliot, K.C.B., had a copy of Tarikh-Ali-Wardi-Khan (*c*) *i.e.*, a copy of this manuscript.

(G) *Sagarfnama-i-Wilyat* by Itsamuddin, son of Tajuddin, an inhabitant of Kasbā in paragana Pñacnar in Nadiā district (Bengal). The work is an account of a voyage from Calcutta to London undertaken by the author in the ship of Captain Swinton in the year 1766 with the object of carrying a letter of representation regarding the Dewani from Emperor Shah Alam II to the then King of England. The author who had a long official career in Bengal and Delhi, spent two years and nine months in his journey to England but returned unsuccessful in his mission for reasons which he has narrated in an interesting way. I have utilised the copy preserved

(*c*) Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1854, p. 248.

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in an old Wakf Library of Dewan Nasir Ali of Kujhua in the district of Saran through the help of my friend Prof. Sayyid Hasan Askari, M.A., B.L. It had been presented as one of our exhibits before the Indian Historical Records Commission at Patna in December, 1930.

(H) *Bayan-i-Waqai* by Khwaja Abdul Karim, who accompanied Nadir Shah and travelled in India, Persia, Arabia and Ceylon, between 1151 and 1156 A. H. (1738-43 A. D.). This manuscript also was obtained by me from the Kujhua Wakf Library and was presented before the Indian Historical Records Commission, December, 1930. An incomplete Engligh translation of it is preserved in the Imperial Library, Calcutta.

(J) *Hadiqat-ul-Aqualim* by Murtaza Husayan known as Allah Yar Usmani Balgrami (manuscript No. 637 in the Oriental Public Library). This is an extensive geographical work containing detailed historical, biographical and literary information. The author, who was born at Balgram in 1719 A.D., writes in the preface that in 1729 A.D. he entered into the service of Mubariz-ul-mulk, the Subhadar of Gujrat and till 1773 served successively in the courts of Sadat Ali and Safdar Jang of Oudh, Mir Kasim Khan, Nazim of Bengal, and Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukkabad. In 1776 A.D. he was introduced to Captain Jonathan Scott, who employed him as one

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of his munshis and requested him to write this work. This work was lithographed in Lucknow in 1879 A.D. *Vide*, Elliot, History of India, Vol. VIII, pp. 180-83.

3. Records of the E. I. C. containing a vast mass of data for a correct Social and Economic history of Bengal from the middle of the 18th century onwards. These have appeared to me to be the most valuable of all the sources cousulted for this thesis.

(A) Unpublished :—

(*i*) Letters to the *Court of Directors* from Bengal Nos. 10-14 (1740-48 A. D.), (*ii*) *Nawab of Bengal*, 1752. Extract of a letter from Robert Clive dealing with certain monetary transactions, cases of death among the Company's civil servants, the necessity of beating the Nawab of Bengal, etc., (*iii*) Records of Public Department ; these include *Consultations*, *General Letters* to and from the *Court of Directors* and various other papers and correspondence, (*iv*) *Letters* from the *Court of Directors*, 1740-64, (*v*) *Bengal Secret Consultations*, 1760-65.

(B) Published :—(*i*) Rev. J. Long, *Selections from unpublished Records of the Government of India*, (*ii*) S. C. Hill, Bengal in 1756-57, Vols. I, II, III. (Indian Records Series), (*iii*) *Bengal and Madras Papers*, Vols. II, III (Government of India Publication), (*iv*) *Midnapur and Chittagong*

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District Records (Bengal Secretariat Press Publication), (*v*) *Original papers relating to the disturbances in Bengal from 1759-63*, Vols. I, II, published in London in 1765 A. D. (Imperial Library, Calcutta), (*vi*) W. K. Firminger, *Fifth Report*, Vols. I, II, III, (*vii*) *Select Committee's Proceedings in the year 1758* edited by W. K. Firminger (Bengal Secretariat Press Publication), (*viii*) *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. II, and (*ix*) S. C. Hill, *An abstract of the Early Records of the Foreign Department*, Part I, 1756-62 (published by the Imperial Record Department, Calcutta, 1901), (*x*) Wheeler, *Early Records of British India*, (*xi*) A letter from certain gentlemen of the Council at Bengal, to the Hon'ble the Secret Committee for affairs of the Hon'ble Limited Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies containing reasons against the revolution in favour of Cossim Ali Khan, which was brought about by Governor Vansittart soon after his arrival in that province, London, 1764, (*xii*) *Diaries of three Surgeons of Patna*, 1763, edited by W. K. Firminger, 1909, (*xiii*) Letters relating to East India Company, 1754 (Imperial Library, Calcutta), (*xiv*) The East India Examiner Nos. 1-9, 11, London, 1766, (*xv*) Indian Records, with a commercial view of the relations between the British Government and the Nawab Nazims of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, London, 1870.

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4. Works of contemporary European writers and travellers (histories, travels, memoirs, etc.) :—

(*a*) Orme, *History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan*, Vol. II.

(*b*) Capt. Cope, *A New History of the East Indies*, London, 1758.

(*c*) Stavorinus, *Voyage to the East Indies*, (1768-1771), Vols. I, II, III.

(*d*) Edward Ives' *Voyage from England to India in the year 1754*. London, 1773.

(*e*) *Indian Tracts* by John Zephaniah Holwell. London, 1774.

(*f*) J. Z. Holwell, *Interesting Historical Events relating to the Provinces of Bengal and the Empire of Indostan*, 3 parts.

(*g*) Vansittart's *Narrative*, Vols. I, II, III. London, 1766.

(*h*) Verelst, *A View of the Rise, Progress and Present State of the English Government in Bengal*. London, 1772.

(*i*) Bolts, *Considerations on Indian Affairs*, London, 1772.

(*j*) *Reflections on the Present Commotions in Bengal*. London, 1764.

(*k*) Pattullo, *An Essay upon the cultivation of the Lands, and improvements of the Revenues of Bengal*. London, 1772.

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(*l*) Scrafton, *Reflections on the Government of Indostan.* London, 1763.

(*m*) Scrafton, *Observations on Vansittart's Narrative.*

(*n*) Parker, *The History of the War in India, between Serajdowlah, Nawab of Bengal, and the English. With an account of the customs and manners of the inhabitants of India.* London, 1789.

(*o*) Abbe de Guyon, *A New History of the East Indies,* 2 vols. London, 1757.

(*p*) Rennel, *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar.* London, 1778.

(*q*) Rennel's *Journals* (Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1910). Edited by T. D. LaTouche.

(*r*) Abbe Raynal, *A Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of Europeans in the East and West Indies.* 6 vols. 1782 edition.

(*s*) Rennel, *Memoir of the Map of Hindostan.* London, 1788.

(*t*) Lieut.-Col. Alexander Dow, *Hindostan* (translated from Original Persian with dissertations of Dow), 1768.

(*t.a*) Stewart's *History of Bengal.*

(*u*) Craufurd, *Sketches chiefly relating to the history, religion, learning and manners of the Hindoos.* London, 1790.

(*v*) *Considerations on the present state of the East India Company's affairs* : by a person, now,

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(*y*) Facts relating to the Treaty of Commerce concluded by Governor Vansittart with the Nabob of Bengal, etc. London, 1764.

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(*v*) R. C. Dutt, *India under Early British Rule* ; (*vi*) J. C. Sinha, *Economic Annals of Bengal* ; (*vii*) Hamilton, *Trade Relations* ; (*viii*) Walsh, *History of Murshidabad*; (*ix*) Sir George C. M. Birdwood, *The Industrial Arts of India*, London, 1800; (*x*) William Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, 2 vols. London, 1873, (*xi*) Robert Montgomery Martin, *The History, antiquities, topography and statistics of Eastern India*, etc., London, 1838 ; (*xii*) By the same author, *The Indian Empire*, London, 1858-61; (*xiii*) Ward, *History of the Hindoos*, 3 vols., Serampore, 1818; (*xiv*) Nagendra Nath Ghosa, *Memoirs of Maharaja Nabkissan*, Calcutta, 1901; (*xv*) Rameschandra Dutt, *The Literature of Bengal*. Calcutta, 1877; revised edition in London, 1895; (*xvi*) Mill, *History of British India*, vols. 3 and 4; (*xvii*) Auber, *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India*, 2 vols. London, 1837; (*xviii*) Henry Beveridge, *A Comprehensive History of India*, 3 vols. Edinburgh and London, 1858-1862; (*xix*) Captain Arthur Broome, *History of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Army*, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1850; (*xx*) *Asiatic Researches*, Vols. 1-20, Calcutta, 1788-1836; (*xxi*) Edward Thornton, *The History of the British Empire in India*, 6 vols., London, 1841.

(B) Bengali :—(*i*) *Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita* ; (*i.a*) Rājibalocana, *Kṛṣnacandracarita* ; (*ii*) *Srīhaṭṭera Itibṛtta* by Achyuta Charan Chowdhry ; (*iii*) K. P. Bandopadhyaya, *Nabābī Āmalera Bāngālāra*

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6. Magazines and Journals :—

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(B) Bengali :—*Navyabhārata*; *Sāhitya*; *Pravāsī*; *Basumatī* ; *Bhāratavarṣa*; *Vaṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣad Patrikā*; *Bicitrā.*

7. Maps :—

(A) Rennel's Map of Hindostan.
(B) Maps in the District Gazetteers.
(C) Government of India Survey Maps.

8. (A) *Hobson-Jobson.*

(B) Wilson, *Glossary of Anglo-Indian Terms.*

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